With Illustrations of the Various Breeds

CATS

Their Points, and Classification

With a Chapter on Feline Ailments and Their Remedies

M. L. Davies
from Wm Hamilton Bird
13th Aug 1911.

CATS:

Their Points and Characteristics.

"SHIPMATES."

"CATS:"

THEIR

POINTS AND CHARACTERISTICS,

WITH

CURIOSITIES OF CAT LIFE,

AND

A CHAPTER ON FELINE AILMENTS.

BY

W. GORDON STABLES, M.D., C.M., R.N.,

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CATS.

CHAPTER I.

[*See Note A, Addenda.*]

APOLOGETIC.

"If ye mane to write a preface to your book, sure you must put it in the end entoirely."

Such was the advice an Irish friend gave me, when I talked of an introductory chapter to the present work on cats. I think it was a good one. Whether it be owing to our style of living now-a-days, which tends more to the development of brain than muscle; or whether it be, as Darwin says, that we really are descended from the ape, and, as the years roll on, are losing that essentially animal virtue—patience; certainly it is true that we cannot tolerate prefaces, preludes, and long graces before meat, as our grandfathers did. A preface, like Curaçoa—and—B, before dinner, ought to be short and sweet: something

merely to give an edge to appetite, or it had as well be put in the "end entoirely," or better still, in the fire.

I presume, then, the reader is fond of the domestic cat; if only for the simple reason that God made it. Yes; God made it, and man mars it. Pussy is an ill-used, much persecuted, little understood, and greatly slandered animal. It is with the view, therefore, of gaining for our little fireside friend a greater meed of justice than she has hitherto obtained, of removing the ban under which she mostly lives, and making her life a more pleasant and happy one, that the following pages are written; and I shall deem it a blessing if I am *in any way* successful. I have tried to paint pussy just as she is, without the aid of "putty and varnish;" and I have been at no small pains to prove the authenticity of the various anecdotes, and can assure the reader that they are all *strictly true*.

CHAPTER II.

[*See Note B, Addenda.*]

PUSSY ON HER NATIVE HEARTH.

"It wouldn't have surprised me a bit, doctor," said my gallant captain to me, on the quarter-deck of the saucy *Pen-gun*,—"It wouldn't have surprised me a bit, if they had sent you on board, minus the head. A nice thing that would have been, with so many hands sick."

"And rather unconvenient for me," I added, stroking my neck.

I had been explaining to the gentleman, that my reason for not being off the night before, was my finding myself on the desert side of the gates of Aden after sun-down. A strange motley cut-throat band I had found myself among, too. Wild Somalis, half-caste Indian Jews, Bedouin Arabs, and burly Persian merchants, all armed with sword and spear and shield, and long rifles that, judging by their build, seemed made to shoot round corners. Strings of camels lay on the

ground; and round each camp-fire squatted these swarthy sons of the desert, engaged in talking, eating, smoking, or quarrelling, as the case might be. Unless at Falkirk tryst, I had never been among such a parcel of rogues in my life. I myself was armed to the teeth: that is, I had nothing but my tongue wherewith to defend myself. I could not help a feeling of insecurity taking possession of me; there seemed to be a screw that wanted tightening somewhere about my neck. Yet I do not now repent having spent that night in the desert, as it has afforded me the opportunity of settling that long-disputed question—the origin of the domestic cat.

Some have searched Egyptian annals for the origin of their pet, some Persian, and some assert they can trace its descent from the days of Noah. I can go a long way beyond that. It is difficult to get over the flood, though; but I suppose my typical cat belonged to some one of the McPherson clan. McPhlail was telling McPherson, that he could trace his genealogy from the days of Noah.

"And mine," said the rival clansman, "from nine hundred years before that."

"But the flood, you know?" hinted the McPhlail.

"And did you ever hear of a Phairson that hadn't a boat of his own?" was the indignant retort.

In the midst of a group of young Arabs, was one that attracted my special attention. He was an old man who looked, with his snow-white beard, his turban and robes, as venerable as one of Doré's patriarchs. In sonorous tones, in his own noble language, he was reading from a book in his lap, while one arm was coiled lovingly round a beautiful long-haired cat. Beside this man I threw myself down. The fierceness of his first glance, which seemed to resent my intrusion, melted into a smile as sweet as a woman's, when I began to stroke and admire his cat. Just the same story all the world over,—praise a man's pet and he'll do anything for you; fight for you, or even lend you money. That Arab shared his supper with me.

"Ah! my son," he said, "more than my

goods, more than my horse, I love my cat. She comforts me. More than the smoke she soothes me. Allah is great and good; when our first mother and father went out into the mighty desert alone, He gave them two friends to defend and comfort them—the dog and the cat. In the body of the cat He placed the spirit of a gentle woman; in the dog the soul of a brave man. It is true, my son; the book hath it."

After this I remained for some time speculatively silent.

The old man's story may be taken—according to taste—with or without a grain of salt; but we must admit it is as good a way of accounting for domestic pussy's origin as any other.

There really is, moreover, a great deal of the woman's nature in the cat. Like a woman, pussy prefers a settled home to leading a roving life. Like a true woman, she is fond of fireside comforts. Then she is so gentle in all her ways, so kind, so loving, and so forgiving. On your return from business, the very look of her honest face, as she sits

purring on the hearth-rug, with the pleasant adjuncts of a bright fire and hissing tea-urn, tends to make you forget all the cares of the day. When you are dull and lonely, how often does her "punky humour," her mirth-provoking attitudes and capers banish ennui. And if you are ill, how carefully she will watch by your bedside and keep you company. How her low song will lull you, her soft caresses soothe you, giving you more real consolation from the looks of concern exhibited on her loving little face, than any language could convey.

On the other hand, like a woman, she is prying and curious. A locked cupboard is often a greater source of care and thought to pussy, than the secret chamber was to the wife of Blue Beard. I'm sure it is only because she cannot read that she refrains from opening your letters of a morning, and only because she cannot speak that she keeps a secret. Like a woman, too, she dearly loves a gossip, and will have it too, even if it be by night on the tiles, at the risk of keeping the neighbours awake. Oh! I'm

far from sure that the Arab isn't right, after all.

Pussy, from the very day she opens her wondering eyes and stares vacantly around her, becomes an object worthy of study and observation. Indeed, kittens, even before their eyes are opened, will know your voice or hand, and spit at a stranger's. The first year of pussy's existence is certainly the happiest. No creature in the world is so fond of fun and mischief as a kitten. Everything that moves or is movable, from its mother's tail to the table-cloth, must minister to its craze for a romp; but what pen could describe its intense joy, its pride and self-satisfaction, when, for the first time it has caught a real live mouse? This is as much an episode in the life of a kitten, as her first ball is to a young lady just out. Nor do well-trained and properly-fed cats ever lose this innate sense of fun, and love of the ridiculous. They lose their teeth first. I have seen demure old cats, of respectable matronly aspect,—cats that ought to have known better,—leave their kittens when only

BLACK and WHITE.

First Prize—Owned by J. Bradden, Esq.

WILD CAT (Half-Bred).

First Prize—Owned by A. H. Seager, Esq.

a day old, and gambol round the room after a cork till tired and giddy.

Cats of the right sort never fail to bring their kittens up in the way they should go, and soon succeed in teaching them all they know themselves. They will bring in living mice for them, and always take more pride in the best warrior-kitten than in the others. They will also inculcate the doctrine of cleanliness in their kits, so that the carpet shall never be wet. I have often been amused at seeing my own cat bringing kitten after kitten to the sand-box, and showing it how to use it, in action explaining to them what it was there for. When a little older, she entices them out to the garden.

Cats can easily be taught to be polite and well-mannered. It depends upon yourself, whether you allow your favourite to sit either on your shoulder or on the table at meal-times, or to wait demurely on the hearth till you have finished. In any case, her appetite should never get the better of her good manners.

"We always teach our cats," writes a

lady to me, "to wait patiently while the family are at their meals, after which they are served. Although we never keep a dish for them standing in a corner, as some people do, yet we never had a cat-thief. Our Tom and Topsy used to sit on a chair beside my brother, near the table, with only their heads under the level of it. They would peep up occasionally to see if the meal were nearly over; but on being reminded that their time had not come, they would immediately close their eyes and feign to be asleep.

"Poor old Tom knew the time my brother came in from business, and if five or ten minutes past his time, he would go to the door and listen, then come back to the fire-side showing every symptom of impatience and anxiety. He knew the footsteps of every member of the family, and would start up, before the human ear could detect a sound, and hasten to the door to welcome the comer. He knew the knock of people who were frequent visitors, and would greet the knock of a stranger with an angry growl.

"Tom would never eat a mouse until he

had shown it to some member of the family, and been requested to eat it; and although brought up in a country village, made himself perfectly at home in Glasgow, although living on the third floor. But poor faithful fellow, after sticking to us through all the varied changes of fourteen years, one wintry morning—he had been out all night—when I drew up the window to call him, he answered me with such a plaintive voice, that I at once hastened down to see what was the matter. He was lying helpless and bleeding among the snow, with one leg broken. He died."

Cats will often attach themselves to some one member of a family in preference to all others. They are as a rule more fond of children than grown-up people, and usually lavish more affection on a woman than a man. They have particular tastes too, as regards some portions of the house in which they reside, often selecting some room or corner of a room which they make their "sanctum sanctorum."

Talking of her cats, a lady correspondent

says:—"Toby's successor was a black and white kitten we called Jenny. Jenny was considered my father's cat, as she followed him and no one else. Our house and that of an aunt were near to each other, and on Sabbath mornings it was my father's invariable custom to walk in the garden, closely followed by Jenny, afterwards going in to visit his sister before going to church. Jenny enjoyed those visits amazingly; every one was so fond of her, and she was so much admired, that she began to pay them visits of her own accord upon weekdays. I am sorry to say that Jenny eventually abused the hospitality thus held out to her. For, as time wore on, pussy had, unknown to us, been making her own private arrangements for an event of great interest which was to occur before very long. And this is how it was discovered when it did come off. Some ladies had been paying my aunt a visit, and the conversation not unnaturally turned on dress.

"'Oh! but,' said my aunt, 'you must have a sight of my new velvet bonnet,—so

handsome,—one pound fifteen shillings,—and came from London. I do trust it won't rain on Sunday. Eliza, go for the box under the dressing-table in the spare bedroom.'

"Although the door of this room was kept constantly shut, the window was opened by day to admit the fresh air. It admitted more,—it admitted Jenny,—and Jenny did not hesitate to avail herself of the convenience of having her kittens in that room.

"Eliza had not been gone five minutes, when she returned screaming,—'Oh, murther! murther!' that is all she said. She just ran back again, screaming the same words, and my aunt and friends hastened after her. The sight that met their gaze was in no way alarming: it was only Jenny cosily ensconced in the box—the bonnet altered in shape to suit circumstances—looking the picture of innocence and joy as she sung to six blind kittens.

"Summary and condign was the punishment that fell on the unlucky Jenny. The kittens were ordered to be instantly drowned,—we managed to save just one,—and pussy

sentenced to be executed as soon as the gardener came in the morning. This sentence was afterwards commuted to transportation for life from my aunt's house; and it was remarkable, that although Jenny took her Sabbath morning walks as usual with my father, she never entered my aunt's dwelling, but waited patiently until my father came out." Jenny's master died.

"Jenny seemed to miss my father greatly. She used to go to the garden on a Sunday, as usual, but walked up and down disconsolate and sad; and on her return would take up her old position outside my aunt's door, and wait and wait, always thinking he would surely come. This constant waiting and watching for him that would come again no more, was the first thing that softened my aunt's heart to poor Jenny; and she was freely forgiven for the destruction of the velvet bonnet, and took up her abode for life with my aunt, on whom she bestowed all the affection she had previously lavished on my father."

Kittens, like the young of most animals—mankind included—are sometimes rather

selfish towards their parents. A large kitten that I knew, used to be regularly fed with mice which its mother caught and brought to it from a stack-yard. Instead of appearing grateful, he used to seize the mouse and, running growling to a corner, devour the whole of it. His mother must have thought this rather unfair, for after standing it three or four times, she brought in the mouse, and slapped him if he dared to touch it until she had eaten her share—the hind quarters; then he had to be content with the rest.

I knew of a cat that, in order to avoid the punishment which she thought she merited on committing an offence, adopted the curious expedient of having two homes. Her failing was fish. If there had been no fish in the world, she would have been a strictly honest cat. She warred against the temptation, but it was of no use; the spirit was willing but the flesh weak, and the smell of fish not to be resisted. As long as she could steal without being found out, it was all right, things went on smoothly; but whenever she was caught tripping, she bade

good-bye for a time to that home, and took up her quarters at the other, distant about half a mile. Here she would reside for a month or more, as the case might be, until the theft of another haddock or whiting caused her to return to the other house. And so on; this cat kept up the habit of fluctuating backwards and forwards, between her two homes, as long as she lived. She was never thrashed, and, I think, did not deserve to be.

It is a common thing for a she-cat, if her kittens are all drowned, to take to suckling a former kitten—even a grown-up son has sometimes to resume the office and duties of baby to a bereaved mother, and is in general no ways loath to do so. There is a horrid cat in a village in Yorkshire, who, every time his mother has kittens, steals them, taking them one by one to the cellar, and eating them. When there are no more to eat, filial piety constrains him to suckle his dam, until she deems it fit that he should be weaned. He has been weaned already four times, to my knowledge.

If a kitten has been given away, and for some reason or other returns again to its mother's home, the first thing that mother does is to give him a sound hiding, afterwards she receives him into favour, and gives him her tail to play with by way of *solatium*. Mothers will sometimes correct their very young kittens; for instance, if it squeals when she wants to get away for a short time, two or three smart pats with a mittened paw generally make it go fast asleep.

The cat's love of fun is perhaps one of the most endearing traits in her character. Who has not laughed to see the antics performed by some pet cat, whom its mistress wished to bring into the house for the night. Pussy has been walking with her mistress in the garden; but the night is fair and moonlit, and she hasn't the slightest intention of coming in, for at least half-an-hour yet. So round the walks she flies, romping and rollicking, with tail in the air, and eyes crimson and green with the mischief that is in them; always popping out when least expected, and sometimes brushing the lady's

very skirts. Now she walks demurely up to her mistress, as if soliciting capture, and just as she is being picked up,—"Ah! you thought you had me, did you?" and off she scampers to the other end of the garden. Anon, she is up a tree, and grinning like an elf from the topmost branches; and no amount of pet names, blarney, or coaxing will entice her down or into the house until, as they say in the north, her ain de'il bids her. Pussy's fondness for frolic has led to strange results sometimes, as the following will testify:—

In an old-fashioned house, in an old-fashioned parish, in the county of Aberdeenshire, there lived, not many years ago, a farmer of the name of D——. His family consisted of his wife, two marriageable daughters, and a beautiful tabby cat. This cat was well fed and cared for, and being so, was an excellent mouser. Indeed, it was averred by the farmer that no rat would live within a mile of her. The house stood by itself some distance off the road, but, though surrounded by lofty pine-trees, it had by

no means the appearance of a place, which a ghost of average intellect and any claim to respectability would select, as the scene of its midnight peregrinations. Besides, there was no story attached to the house. No one had ever been murdered there, so far as was known. No old miser had ever resided within its walls; and though several members of the family had died in the old box-bed, they had all passed away in the most legitimate manner. Old granny was the only one at all likely to come back; but what could she have forgotten? The old lady was sensible to the last, and behaved like a brick. She told them candidly she was "wearin' awa';" sat up in bed and in a sadly quavering voice sang the Old Hundred; then handed over the key of the tea-caddy, where she kept her "trifle siller," with the remark that they would find among the rest two old pennies, which she had kept especially to be placed in her eyes when her "candle went out."

In spite of this, however, the honest farmer and his family were all awakened one night

by hearing the parlour bell rung, and rung too with great force. They couldn't all have been dreaming. Besides, while they were yet doubting and deliberating, lo! the bell rung a second time. John and his wife shook in their shoes. That is merely a figure of speech; for, properly speaking, they hadn't even their stockings on. The marriageable daughters would have fainted, but they had only read of fainting in books, and had no idea how it was done. It must be allowed matters were alarming enough. Who or what dreadful thing was thus urgently demanding an interview at that untimely hour of night, in that lone house among the pine-trees. The bell rang a third time; and, urged by the entreaties of his wife to be brave for once and go—she did not say come—and see, John at last reached down his old brown Bess—it had been loaded for five years—and with a candle in his other hand, his wife holding on by the skirts of his night-dress, and the marriageable daughters bringing up the rear, prepared to march upon the parlour.

In Indian file, and all in white, they might have been mistaken for a party of priests going to celebrate midnight mass. No ghost could have withstood the sight of that procession. It must have burst out laughing, unless, indeed, a very *grave* ghost. When at last they reached the parlour, neither sight nor sound rewarded them for their heroism. Everything was in its usual place, and nothing was disturbed. A search all over the house proved too that the doors were all locked, the windows fastened, and no one either up the chimney or under the beds. So the mystery was put down to super-human agency, or, as the good wife termed it, "something no canny;" and they all went trembling back to bed, and lay awake in great fear till the cock crew.

For nearly a fortnight after this, almost every night, and sometimes even by day, the same strange disturbances occurred, and all efforts to solve the mystery were fruitless. So it got rumoured abroad that the house was haunted. All the usual remedies were had recourse to for the purpose of

exorcism, but in vain. The parson came twice to pray in the room. He might as well have stopped at home. Equally unsuccessful were the services of an old lady, whom her enemies called a witch, her friends "the wisest woman in the parish." Things began to look serious. The goodwife was getting thin, her daughters hysterical, and John himself began to lose caste among the neighbours. It was openly hinted, that some deed of blood must have been committed by him, in that same house and room. Nor could his thirty years of married life and unblemished reputation save him. He had been *too* quiet, people said, and *too* regular in his attendance at church; besides, he had a down look about him, and, on the whole, hanging was too good for him. Some averred that strange sights and sounds were seen and heard by people who had occasion to pass that house at night, among other things a light gliding about in the copse-wood. No, they would not believe it was only John locking up the stable; and the devil himself, in the shape of a fox, was seen at early

morning coming directly from the house. Of course the devil had a fine fat hen over his shoulders, but that had nothing to do with the matter. Poor John! it had come to this, that he had serious thoughts of giving up his farm and going to America, when a rollicking young student in the neighbourhood, who did not believe in spirits—except ardent—proposed to the farmer that they should "wake the ghost."

"Wake the ghost!" said the farmer, "ye little ken, lad. He's wide enough awake already."

"Wake him," repeated the student; "sit up at night, you know, and wait till he comes."

John turned pale.

"I'll sit with you," continued the young man. "If he's a civil ghost, we can hear what he has got to say; for

> 'The darkest nicht I fear nae deil,
> Warlock, nor witch in Gowrie.'"

Very reluctantly John consented; but he did consent; and that night the two met in the haunted chamber alone, just before

the old clock on the stair told the hour of midnight.

"What have you got under your arm?" inquired the student.

"The ha' Bible," replied John, in a sepulchral voice; "is that a Bible you've brought?"

"No, it's whisky," said the student, "about the only spirit you are likely to see to-night; and there won't be the ghost of that left by cock-crow."

So they waited and watched, John reading, the student smoking steadily and drinking periodically. One o'clock came, and two o'clock, and the candle was burning low in the socket, when suddenly, "Hist!" said the student, and "Hush!" said John. They could distinctly hear footsteps about them in the room, but no one visible. They were really frightened now. Then something rushed past them, and the bell rang, and there, lo, and behold! from the rope dangled John's decent tabby cat.

"And the Lord's name be praised," said John piously, closing the book.

"Such ghosts as these," said the student, "are best exorcised with a broom-handle; but, see! this explains." He held up the rope, to the end of which—country fashion—was attached *a hare's foot!*

CHAPTER III.

[*See Note C, Addenda.*]

PUSSY'S LOVE OF CHILDREN.

THE cat is more than any other creature the pet of our early years. Almost the first animal we notice, when we are old enough to notice anything, is pussy, with her beautiful markings, her well-pleased, homely face, sleek and shining fur, and soft paws, which she never ungloves in the presence of childhood. Children and cats, especially young ones, have so very much in common. Both are innocent, sinless, and easily pleased, and both are full of fun and frolic. Children will often play with a kitten until they kill the poor thing. In the country, pussy's place may easily be supplied by some other toy; but to a poor little gutter-child the loss is simply irreparable, and she will nurse her dead kitten in the mud for a week. The way children use poor patient pussy is at times anything but commendable; and while

deprecating the conduct of parents in allowing them to treat the cat so, we cannot but admire pussy's extreme forbearance and uncomplaining good nature, under what must be considered very trying circumstances. It is nothing to see Miss Puss or Master Tom dressed up in a shawl and neatly fitting cap, and lugged about as a doll, carried by the tail over the child's shoulder, or worn as a comforter round his neck. Yet pussy seems to know that there is no harm meant, and that the children really love her dearly; so she never attempts to scratch, far less to bite. All experience goes to prove, too, that it is generally the child that uses her the worst, to whom pussy is most attached.

The 'dead playmate' is a picture you will often see in real life. I saw one not a month ago. A pretty little child, with round, wondering eyes, swollen with recent tears, sitting in the corner of a field in the summer sunshine. On her lap lay—among a handful of daisies and corn-poppies—a wee dead kitten: life had but lately left it. When I spoke to her, her grief burst out afresh.

"O sir, my pussy's deadëd, my pretty pussy's deadëd!"

There would be no more games of romps in the garden, no more scampering together through the green fields after the butterfly, no more making pussy a doll. She would go lonely to bed to-night and cry herself asleep, for pretty pussy was "deadëd."

In the adjacent street to where I now live, is a fine large red-tabby Tom. He is a famous mouser, a noted hunter, and a gentleman every inch. He was faithful in love and dauntless in war. When I tried to stroke him, he gave me a look and a growl of such unmistakable meaning, that I mechanically put my hands in my pockets and whistled. He makes no friends with strangers. Yet Tom has a little mistress, not much over three years old, whom he dearly loves, and from whom he is seldom absent. He lies down on his side, and allows little Alice to lift him, although she can hardly totter along with her burden, which she carries as often by the tail as any way else. She sleeps beside him on the hearth-rug, Tom

winding his arms lovingly around her neck, and little Alice declares that pussy "carries his kisses on his nose."

Wee Elsie S——, though only six years old, has completely tamed—as far as she herself is concerned—what might almost be called a wild cat, it having been bred and brought up in the woods. This cat has only two good qualities, namely, his great skill in vermin-killing, and his fondness for little Elsie. Neither the child's father, mother, nor the servants, dare put a finger on this wild brindled Tom; but as soon as Elsie comes down in the morning, and puss is let in, with a fond cry he rushes towards her, singing and caressing her with evident satisfaction. He then does duty as a doll all day, or follows the child wherever she goes, and sleeps with her when she sleeps.

"In our nursery," writes a lady correspondent, "there was always a cat, which was the favourite companion of the children, submitting to many indignities which a dog would scarcely have endured with so much patience. One handsome tabby cat, named

by us children Roland the Brave, used to hold his place in front of the nursery fire, with the utmost patience and good-humour, in spite of kettles boiling over on him, nursery-maids treading on his paws and tail, and children teasing him in every possible way."

"The tom-cat which I have at present," says another, "keeps my children company in their walks, and is indeed more careful of them than the maid, who sometimes has forgotten her duty so far as to leave the perambulator to look after itself, while she is talking and laughing with a tall man in red. But Tom is not so thoughtless, and sticks close by the children, showing signs of anger when any one approaches. He seems, moreover, imbued with the idea, that the every-day food of that domestic quadruped, the dog, is babies, and, if any one is foolish enough to come snuffing round the perambulator, Tom mounts him at once, and proceeds forthwith to sharpen his claws in his hide. On one occasion when my family were absent for a few days, Tom was so dis-

consolate that he refused to take his food. To show his love for the children, I made the remark to Tom, in presence of some friends, that baby was in the cradle; the cat jumped up and went directly towards it, and examined it, then returned mewing most mournfully because of the disappointment."

Pussy's love for babies is always very noticeable. In fact, with very little training, she may be taught, if not to nurse, at least to mind, the baby. I know a cat which, as soon as the child is placed in its little cot, lays itself gently down at its back; and this is not for sake of warmth and comfort, as some may allege, but from pure love of baby. For pussy lies perfectly still as long as the child sleeps; but whenever she awakes, even before she cries, the cat jumps down and runs to tell her mistress, runs back to the cradle, and, with her forefeet on the edge, looks alternately at baby and its mother, mewing entreatingly until the child is lifted. Contented now, it throws itself at the mother's feet, and goes quietly off to sleep.

Another cat I know of, that goes regularly to the harvest-field, with its mistress and a young child. The cat remains with the child all day, guarding him and amusing him by playing at hide-and-seek with him, until evening, when the mother, who has only visited her child two or three times during the day, returns, generally to find baby and puss asleep in each other's arms.

Cats too not only mourn the absence of their little master or mistress, but will try to follow them if they can.

"A certain party of my acquaintance," says a lady, "had a large cat called Tabby, who was a great favourite with all the family. Tabby seemed to reciprocate the attachment of the different members, but its fondness for the youngest daughter was something wonderful. It would follow her about wherever she went, and if she ever left home for a short time, poor pussy seemed quite wretched until her return. At one time the child went to reside for two months, with some friends many miles distant. You may fancy her surprise and delight when one

morning, after she had been about a week in her new residence, in marches her dear friend and companion Mistress Tabby, and nothing could induce her to leave again. Pussy took up her abode with the girl, stuck by her all the time, and at the end of the visit faithfully accompanied her back to their home."

A woman, whom I know, has a tom-cat, which watches constantly by the baby's cradle, when its mistress is absent. One day, when hanging up some clothes in the garden, she became suddenly aware of an awful row going on in the room she had just left. She entered, just in time to see Tom riding a large shepherd's collie round the room, and back again, and finally out at the door. Tom was a most cruel jockey, sparing neither bit(e) nor spur, as the howls of the unhappy collie fully testified. That dog hasn't been seen in the immediate vicinity since.

The cat, mentioned in the following anecdote, was surely worthy of the Humane Society's bronze medallion, as much as any Newfoundland ever was.

A certain lady's little son was ill of scarlet fever. The period of inflammation and danger was just over, but the poor child was unable to sit or stand. Through all his illness, he had been carefully watched by a faithful tom-cat, who seldom ever left his bedside by night or by day; for Tom dearly loved the little fellow, who, though now so still and quiet, used to lark and roll with him on the parlour floor. But since his little master's illness, Tom had never been known to make the slightest attempt at fun. One day, the child was taken by its mother from bed, and laid on the cool sofa by way of change; and when he had fallen asleep she gently left the room, Tom being on guard as usual. She had not been gone many minutes, and was engaged in some household duties, when Tom entered, squirrel-tailed and mewing most piteously, looking up into her face, and then running to the door, plainly entreating his mistress to hurry along with him. It was well she did so. Poor Tom ran before her to the room in which she had left her boy, when

she found that, in attempting to get up, the child had fallen on the floor along with the rugs in such a position, that death from suffocation would have inevitably followed, but for the timely aid summoned by this noble tom-cat.

I think I have said enough to prove how fond pussy is of children, and how forbearing towards them; and surely this trait in her character should endear her to us all. But I do thoroughly deprecate pussy's being made a plaything of, whether she be cat or kitten. It is exceedingly cruel of parents to allow it, and is taking an unfair advantage of the cat's good-nature and sense. The way she is lugged about, and tormented by some children, is very prejudicial to her health and appearance. It often does her grievous bodily harm, injures her heart and lungs, and stops her growth, even if it does not induce paralysis and consequent death. Let your children love pussy, pussy loves your children; only kindly point out to them the essential difference between a play*thing* and a play*mate*.

CHAPTER IV.

[*See Note D, Addenda.*]

PUSSY "POLL."

THE following sketch of cat-life is contributed by one who loves "all things both great and small." We give it *in extenso*.

Even supposing it to be endowed with the nine lives ascribed to the race, was it at all probable that I would be successful in rearing to mature cathood that dripping little wretch?

Such was the question, which not without doubt, I asked myself while attempting to dry a kitten, some two weeks old, which I had just saved from death in a neighbouring horsepond. Arrived at home, I put in practice as many of the Royal Humane Society's rules for the treatment of the apparently drowned, as I found applicable to the case in hand, and soon had the satisfaction of seeing my charge, comfortably sleeping in a bed prepared in an old cap, by the fireside. Not less successful were my efforts at nurs-

ing, and in a few weeks, Poll, for so I named my pet, had grown to be the daintiest thing possible; the very impersonation of mischief and fun, without thought or care, from morn till night, except that of—

> "Turning to mirth all things of earth,
> As only kittens can."

Time passed on, however, and with years, or rather months, came troubles, one of the first causes of which to puss was a mirror. To her it was a mystery which cost many hours of deep thought and serious study; but never could she understand why the cat which was always visible in front could neither be seen, felt, nor heard, behind the glass.

Numerous experiments were made to solve the puzzle; but the most common one was for Poll to seat herself in front of the mirror and critically examine her *vis-à-vis*. The thing seeming so real, she next would give the glass a pat with her paw, and run round to the back; but nothing being found there, one paw was then put in front and the other

kept behind. She would then peep round into the glass, and still seeing puss there, would renew her efforts to catch her. This was repeated almost daily for some time; but at last puss seemed to have resolved that the mystery should remain one no longer, so struck at her opponent with full force, and of course seemed to receive a blow in return. In an instant Poll sprang to her feet and assumed a position of defiance; but her foe, nothing loath for the fray, was equally ready. A moment's pause, and puss hurled herself on her foe. There was a crash. A cat rushed wildly out of the door, and I proceeded to gather fragments of a mirror from off the floor.

At meal-times, puss regularly seated herself on my shoulder, and waited patiently for what she considered her due proportion; but if I seemed to neglect her, she gently reminded me of her presence by patting my cheek with her paw. If that was not sufficient, the paw was pressed on my cheek, the claws slowly protruded, and my face drawn round towards her. Success invari-

ably attended this manœuvre; and after receiving her share, she thanked me by rubbing her head against my cheek, and licking my face.

In due course a young family of kittens appeared; but of course they all, save one, met the fate from which I had saved their mother. With the family came family cares. Soon the kitten was old enough to begin to receive its education, and then mice at any time, varied occasionally with a rat or two were to be found lying about the floor. As the kitten got older, and was able to be left for longer periods alone, Poll extended her hunting excursions: one morning she brought home four or five young partridges, and the following day one of the parent birds. The next great hunt produced as many young rabbits, and although to such games I had no great objection to offer; yet, when frogs, toads, or lizards were the produce of a day's sport, as was sometimes the case, I did protest.

On one occasion, while the kitten was playing out of doors, it was pursued by a

dog belonging to a neighbour, but escaped through a hole in a wall close by. Poll, who at some distance had seen the whole affair, at once darted to her kitten's side, and did her best to quiet its fears, telling it, doubtless, that she would take an early opportunity of teaching that dog better manners. The opportunity was not long wanting. Next day the dog again passing, was noticed by puss, who ran and hid behind a corner, near which he would come, and there waited his approach. Just as he turned she sprung on his head, and with teeth and claws took hold so firm that he in vain endeavoured to shake her off. Going to his assistance, I with considerable difficulty disengaged puss, but not before his head was badly torn.

But although thus ready to do battle when occasion required, puss knew also how to evade a foe when so inclined.

Always treating the game-laws with that respect of which they are worthy, puss was of course never disturbed in her rambles by gamekeepers; and so 'twas quite an accident when, being in the middle of a field, she was

chased by a dog belonging to one. Possibly on that particular morning she may have remembered that "discretion is the better part of valour;" and so, when she saw the dog coming, she made for the cliffs, by which on one side the field was bounded. But the dog was swift, and ere half the distance was passed he was upon her. Just, however, as he was about to seize her, she sprang on one side and stopped, the dog rushing forward some half dozen yards. While he was stopping and turning, she darted past, and thus continued to elude him till the cliffs were reached.

While Poll and I were taking a walk one evening, a curious incident occurred. A rook flying overhead seemed struck with some peculiarity about puss; for suddenly checking himself in his flight, he circled once or twice round us both, and apparently satisfied with the survey, darted away to the opposite side of the field, where a large flock of rooks were feeding. He took not time to alight, but gave several peculiar caws, in a tone which seemed to me expressive of great excitement. What

his communication was, I know not; but it seemed perfectly intelligible to the other rooks, which instantly took wing, and, following him as their leader, bore down on puss, who by this time had mounted on the top of a fence, and was quietly taking a survey of the surrounding scenery. At first I expected to see them attempt to carry her off bodily; but if such was their intention, none of them had sufficient courage to begin the attack. Sometimes, indeed, one bolder than the rest would make a near approach; but, as on these occasions puss endeavoured to make a capture, they preferred keeping at a safe distance. For fully five minutes they thus continued to circle around, filling the air with a perfect Babel of sound, and then, as suddenly departed as they had come.

This was almost the last adventure of note which we two had together. Shortly after, having to remove to a distant part of the country, where I could not take my darling with me, it became necessary either to leave her with some acquaintance or destroy her. With increasing years, her temper, never

good towards strangers, did not improve, and being afraid that if I left her behind me she might be subjected to bad treatment, I determined to adopt the course which seemed the lesser of two evils. On the day of my departure, we paid a last visit to the ocean.

> "A splash, a plunge, and all was o'er,—
> The billows rolled on as they rolled before;"

and puss, my most pleasant companion and faithful friend, had met the fate from which I saved her so many years before. "*Sic est vita.*"

CHAPTER V.

[*See Note E, Addenda.*]

SAGACITY OF CATS.

Few people now-a-days think of denying, that man's noble friend the dog possesses a large amount, of what can only be termed reason. I myself believe, that almost every animal does; but in these pages I shall only claim the gift for our mutual friend, the domestic cat. Reason, I consider, is quite different from mere instinct. Instinct is born in an animal; reason is that instinct matured by experience.

I hardly think that you can find a more sagacious animal than the cat. I doubt, indeed, if the dog is; for pussy's peculiar mode of existence, the many enemies she has to encounter, and the struggle she often has to obtain sustenance sufficient to keep life in her poor little body, bring all her faculties into better play, and tend to the development of her reasoning powers.

Before you can fully fathom, what a wonderfully clever and wise creature even the commonest cat is, you must study her life in every phase, both out of doors and at the fireside. No relation of mere sporadic acts of sagacity, such as unfastening a door to get out, breaking a window to get in, or pulling a bell-rope to call the servant, can do justice to pussy's wisdom. Everything she does has a reason for it, and all her plans are properly schemed and thought out beforehand, for she never fails to look before she leaps. Why, my reader, with all due respect to your intellectual powers, if you were to be changed into a cat for four and twenty hours, and had a cat's routine of pleasure and duty to perform, with all your wisdom you would be as dead as a dried haddock before sun-down. Let us try to imagine one day in a cat's life.

Pussy wakes in the morning as fresh as a daisy, for she has slept the sleep of the just and temperate. She finds she has been shut into the parlour; but, though it is broad daylight, the family won't be stirring yet for

another hour. A long weary hour for puss, although she has the patience of Job.

"Now," she thinks, "if a mouse would only pop out from under the fender; sometimes one does." But watching won't bring it; so she jumps upon the window-sill, and gets behind the blind to gaze out at the bright morning, and watch the sparrows, and think of all she will do to-day. "At any rate," she muses, "I shan't be shut in here another night. So silly of me to go to sleep before the fire! And, happy thought, I'll go and see —yes, I must go and see—*him* to-night; he'll be at the old thorn tree, I know, dear, *dear*, Tom."

The hour has worn away, and at last Mary comes to "do out the room." "N.B. Stand by to bolt through between her ugly legs. Done—successful." Now upstairs to mew hungrily at her mistress's door—that ensures a cuddle; and so pussy sings while her mistress dresses. Down to breakfast at last. Soles. Oh! she doats on soles. But why does her mistress get up and leave her alone for a minute with the cream and the

soles, and she so hungry too. What a chance to dip one paw in the cream-jug, or help herself to only just the tail of that inviting sole! But no, she won't; and she doesn't, though the temptation *was* very great. Then mistress returns, and pussy is rewarded for her honesty with a delicious breakfast, and duly purrs her grace after meat.

Two hours afterward she is in her mistress's boudoir alone. Oh! St. Anthony! *Alone with the canary!* Her eyes are drawn magnetically to the cage, her mouth opens of its own accord, her teeth water, and unconsciously she fires off a series of miniature mews, expressive of extreme desire. One little spring, and that beautiful bird would be hers. But again she won't, she'll only just look at it; and if a cat may look at a king, surely, she may at a canary. Reader, have you ever eaten a canary? A live canary, feathers and all? No! then I fear there is but little chance of your giving pussy half the credit due to her, for resisting that sore temptation and letting birdie live.

But, rats and rabbits! what has pussy done now? While canary-gazing, she has been standing on the escritoire, and inadvertently spilled all her mistress's purple ink; and, to make matters worse, that young lady enters, in time to witness the accident and see puss making a face at the canary.

"Oh! you wicked, wicked, ungrateful cat!" Pussy flies and hides beneath the sofa. Those cruel, unjust words, how they rankle in her breast! "She will never never speak to her mistress again, nor to any one in the world, not even to Tom. She will die beneath that sofa." So in doleful dumps she spends two whole hours. How very irksome! If her mistress would only speak now, she might come out, perhaps; but she only knits, knits. Suddenly, down rolls the ball of worsted. Hurrah! out pops puss like an animated arrow, and darts round and round the room after it like a mad thing. Her mistress smiles, and pussy is up on her lap in an instant, singing for joy because she is restored to favour.

Somehow, pussy in the afternoon accident-

ally finds herself in Farmer Hodge's pigeon-loft. She has merely come to have a look at the pretty creatures, being fond of that sort of thing. Hark! though, a footstep on the ladder, and enter Farmer Hodge himself. Poor pussy's intentions in the pigeon-loft have been vilely misconstrued by that rude man, and she herself kicked right out of the gable-door—a fall of twenty feet at least; however, she has the presence of mind to whirl round, and alights on her feet, and thus saves her neck. It is only a quarter of a mile to run home; so she is off, hotly pursued by the farmer and his horrid collie. There is one tree on the way, and she gains it just in time to save her back; and the ugly dog stops and barks up at her. A long way astern comes, puffing and blowing, the farmer himself, and when he arrives he will stone her. One minute to get her breath; then down, flop on the back of the collie, jumps pussy. Round and round the tree she rides him twice, then dismisses him howling. The dog runs back to his master, with a bloody nose and one eye seriously damaged, while pussy, scot free, re-

gains the shelter of her home, just in time for dinner. "Now, my little lady," says pussy's mistress, about bed-time, "I see you are watching to get out, and indeed you mustn't; so come with me." A little deceit is absolutely necessary now, if pussy wants to gain her ends. After all, it is only policy; so pussy purring complacently accompanies her mistress to her bed-room. But having duly sung the young lady asleep, she quietly steals from her side and creeps to the window. Luckily, it is open. Fifteen feet is a tallish jump though; but she remembers that when Farmer Hodge gave her a hint to leave the pigeon-loft, she leaped twenty feet. She feels that hint on her rump even now; but here goes. She has done it, and is safe. Then what a delicious sense of freedom and prospective bliss! And, hark! yonder is Tom's melodious voice in the distance, and pussy is off in the moonlight to meet him, and she "won't go home till morning."

Cats are very sensitive to kindness, and are never ungrateful for benefits received.

A certain labouring woman got a cat, to

which she became greatly attached. When the time came round, for her absence for six weeks at harvest, in a distant part of the country, she took her cat, and the one kitten it was giving suck to, and gave it in charge of a brother who lived three miles from her own village. But here poor pussy wasn't happy. The children beat and otherwise annoyed her; so she returned to her own home in the village, leaving the kitten behind her. Finding the house shut up, she sought shelter in a kindly neighbour's house; and having established herself in her new home, she set out for the house where she had left the kitten. She did not attempt to remove it, however, but simply gave it suck and left again. Twice a day regularly, for three weeks, did this queer pussy trot those six long miles to suckle her kitten, until one day she found it drinking milk from a saucer. After this she never went back. On her mistress's return from harvest, pussy again became her faithful companion; clearly showing that although she was grateful to the neighbour, she knew she did not belong to her. But every year pussy

stayed all the harvest with her benefactress until the return of her mistress; and this habit she kept up all her life, fourteen years.

How do cats know certain days of the week, such as Saturday or Monday?

A shopkeeper, whom I knew, had a nice Tom tabby, which he kept night and day in his shop, to protect his wares from mice and rats. On Saturdays, Tom was allowed to accompany his master home, a distance of nearly a mile, and to remain at home until the following Monday. Pussy got used to this; and as the shop was always kept open until ten o'clock on Saturdays, Tom used regularly to leave the place and go home fully three hours before his master. On the Monday morning, he was always quite ready to accompany him back again. When this cat grew a few years older, he began to tire of night duties. He, no doubt, thought he had done enough when he had been on guard all day. So to get off the night shift, he used to leave the shop when his master made signs of putting up the shutters. He would wait at a convenient distance till his master

came; but finding that he was invariably captured and carried back, he fell upon another plan: he took to leaving the shop an hour before closing time. His master used to meet him half-ways home, but never could put a finger on him.

This same cat had been rescued from an ugly death, when quite a kitten, by a son of his master. Tom was greatly attached to this boy. When the boy grew to be a man, and only visited the house once a year, Tom still knew him, and manifested great delight in seeing him.

Cats, however, do not show the joy they feel on meeting again with a long lost friend in so exuberant a manner as the dog.

On first seeing you they exhibit surprise, then quietly show how glad they are by rubbing round you, singing, and following wherever you go, as if afraid of being again separated. A dog is a more excitable animal, and more demonstrative in every way than the thoughtful pussy.

Every one knows how cats can open doors by jumping up and pressing down the latch;

this trick is more common in tortoiseshell cats than in any others, and often descends from generation to generation.

A lady's favourite cat the other day saved the life of her pet canary. The door of the bird's cage having been by some accident left open, Dickie flew out, and at once made for the outside door, which happened to be open. The cat, however, immediately gave chase, and captured the bird in the lobby. Tom at once returned, and placed the poor bird—half dead with fright—at his mistress's feet.

I know of a cat—not at all a moral specimen—that took a fancy to eat one of her master's rabbits. Knowing that she could not well do this within sight of the dwelling-house, she managed to chase one, or rather walk one, for she was too wise to hurry it, nearly a quarter of a mile from the house. She was just beginning her feast when discovered.

A cat that dwelt in an outhouse, was seen one day to deliberately take a portion of her dinner, and place it in front of a mouse-hole in a corner. She then retired to a distance,

and set herself to watch. Not many minutes after, a fine plump mouse came out, gave one look round, and seeing nothing suspicious, commenced to eat the crumbs; while doing so, pussy sprang upon and captured it easily.

It is a common custom in the north of Scotland, and I suppose is so in other places, for the household cat regularly to attend at the milking of the cows, and to receive her allowance squirted directly from the cow's pap. No matter to what distance it is sent, pussy will adroitly stem the current with open mouth, and eyes closed with delight.

A friend of mine once saw a cat, attempting to suck a quiet good-natured cow. She failed, however; but walked directly up to where the gentleman was standing, and mewing in his face ran back and sat down below the udder, plainly requesting the favour of his assistance. He good-naturedly complied, and every day for weeks afterwards, the cat used to come for him to perform the same kind office.

There is an old old man lives in K———, who has an old old cat. He is over one

hundred years, and the cat is gone nineteen; in that long time they have come to know each other pretty well. One evening, some years ago, pussy was sitting in a particularly studious attitude before the fire, as if it had something important to tell and didn't know how to begin. The old man was looking at her thoughtfully.

"That cat," he said presently, "has something on her mind; haven't you, puss?"

Pussy, to his grandchild's no small astonishment, at once mewed in reply; and jumping up, patted the old man's leg, and commenced trotting to the foot of the stair, looking over her shoulder and asking him to follow.

"Go you, Lizzie," said the old man; and Lizzie went, following the cat up the stairs and into an old lumber garret. There the cause of pussy's anxiety was soon discovered: a litter of five fine kittens, which pussy had had without the knowledge of any one in the house.

Cats are as fond of bird-nesting as any school-boy. A cat last summer found a starling's nest in the gable-end of an old

TORTOISESHELL and WHITE.

First Prize—Owned by J. Hurry, Esq.

TABBY and WHITE.

First Prize—Owned by J. Gamble, Esq.

barn. There were five eggs in it at the time, but these pussy did not touch, she preferred waiting until they were hatched. She was seen to go, sometimes as often as three times a day, and have a peep into the nest. When at length she was rewarded for her patience with the sight of goslings, she coolly put in her paw, drew out the little things one by one and devoured them before their distracted parents' eyes. I did not feel at all sorry for that bereaved mother starling, for she and her impudent husband had rummaged every sparrow's nest about the place, and eaten the eggs.

A man of the name of Claughie, shepherd to a nobleman in the West of Ireland had an enormously large Tom cat, who, as far as milk was concerned, was a notorious thief—the result, no doubt, of a deficient education in his youth. However, Tom was in the habit of committing depredations in the milk-house almost every night. Being always forgiven by the shepherd's wife, he became at last quite a nuisance, and the shepherd determined to give him one sound hiding. He caught Tom

in the very act of stealing cream, and he warmed him accordingly. Tom went out in high dudgeon, and no more was thought of it. But that night Tom returned, and with him a number of other cats. Having surrounded the hut, they proceeded in true Fenian style, to break the windows and force an entrance. The shepherd, afraid of his life, fled to a loft, drawing up the ladder after him. His wife, however, showed more courage. She at once produced two large pansful of cream, and invited the intruders to drink. They did not require a second bidding, and having regaled themselves, they departed in peace and came no more.

But cats will often leave a house and never return, if they have been threatened with a severe licking.

A man residing in Ireland had a nice cat, which was fully eleven years of age, and which he had reared from kittenhood. One day this cat received correction for some offence, and that same night it disappeared. It not only disappeared itself, but enticed a neighbour's cat along with it. Neither of

them ever returned. The two cats had always lived on terms of great intimacy with each other.

Another cat had succumbed to temptation and stolen some fish; she was so afraid of getting whipped for the theft, that she did not enter the house for two whole days. At the end of that time she was coming quietly in, when the goodwife, half in fun, seized hold of the poker, and shaking it at the poor delinquent, "Go out, you thieving hussy," she cried, "and never darken my door again." The cat drew back, and slipped away, and was never seen more in that neighbourhood.

Of the eggs of fowls some cats are exceedingly fond, and if they once acquire a taste for this particular luxury, nothing can ever break them from it, and they will always find ways and means of indulging in the propensity. A cat of my acquaintance used to content herself with two, or at most, three a day. She belonged to a grocer, and was quite honest with regard to everything else. It was the shopkeeper himself who was to

blame for this fault in poor pussy: for in unpacking his eggs he would occasionally drop one, then call pussy's attention to the fact, saying, "Here, pussy, you take that." So in process of time the cat took rather a penchant for eggs. She would jump on the counter whenever the whim struck her, and take an egg from the basket; then, with a face beaming with mischief, she would proceed to make a mouse of it, paw-pawing it until it rolled over on to the floor, as if by the merest accident in the world. Then it was amusing to see the air of astonishment pussy adopted, as she peered wonderingly over the edge of the counter, as much as to say,—"Hullo! broken? Here, pussy, you take that." And down she would jump and lick it up.

CHAPTER VI.

[*See Note F, Addenda.*]

A CAT THAT KEEPS THE SABBATH.

YES, far-seeing reader, you are right, it is a Scotch cat. In England a deficient educational scheme is dead against the chance of any such anomaly. In some parts of bonnie Scotland you "daurna whistle on the Sabbath," the dogs "daurna" bark, the cows "daurna" low, and the cock is confined beneath a barrel, to prevent him giving expression to his independence. England is looked upon as a poor benighted country, living in darkness and ignorance; and a tourist is termed a "poor daft Englisher," or a "gangrel body." But now for the cat.

This pussy completes a family circle, who dwell in a remote village of Forfarshire. It is the only live stock they possess, is an old old-fashioned cat, and of course a great pet. It has a daily round of duties, from which it never varies any more than the clock does. It sleeps with the children, and gets

up at the same hour every morning. It first strolls round all the rooms, watching for a little every mouse-hole, where it has ever killed a mouse. It then goes to its mistress's bedroom, wakes her and sees her dressed, trots before her to the door and is let out, coming in at the same hour every day for breakfast, and showing signs of indignation if its porridge and milk are not ready waiting, or if they are too hot, which it ascertains by a preliminary touch with its toe. Breakfast over, comes a long hour's sleep before the parlour fire in winter, or in the sun in summer-time. Then comes the time for the forenoon constitutional—a mere walk for pastime; true, if a sparrow pops down before its nose, it is nimbly caught and eaten; but at this early hour pussy prefers lighter amusements,—catching butterflies, turtle-turning frogs, climbing trees, or dancing ghillie-callum on the back of the shepherd's unhappy collie-dog. She is always at home a a quarter of an hour before her master, with whom she dines. Reinvigorated by the mid-day meal, pussy now starts on a hunting

expedition, the scene of action being a wood about a quarter of a mile from her residence. Here this cat stays bird-catching among the trees, until the sun sets and there isn't a bird to be seen, and then comes trotting home, A drink of sweet milk forms a light but nutritious supper, and not a bad narcotic; then this methodical puss curls herself up at the "bairnies'" feet, and sings herself and them to sleep. Such is pussy's week-day work, never varying, day by day and year by year. But on Sunday *she does no work*, and neither fights nor hunts, but keeps the house, dumb and demure, like the pious little puss she is; musing with half-shut eyes over the fire, or basking in the sunshine on the garden walk.

What an example to the wild strath-vagrant, Sabbath-breaking cats of other places! Early to bed and early to rise, who can doubt this pussy's wisdom? Who can doubt that in her rural home—

> "She'll crown, in shades like these,
> A youth of labour with an age of ease."

CHAPTER VII.

[*See Note G, Addenda.*]

HONEST CATS.

Numerous instances of the honesty of well-trained cats might be given. My own cat and travelling companion Muffie, has always taken her place on the table at meals, and I have never had reason to repent of the indulgence. Even should I leave the room for half an hour, nothing could tempt her to lay a paw upon anything; neither will she allow any one else, not even the waiter, to touch the viands without my permission. If I go to sleep on the sofa, she immediately mounts guard over me, and it would be very incautious in any one to come within reach of her nails. All sorts of property she guards just the same, and of my starling she is particularly careful.

A gentleman of my acquaintance used to have a cat, which brought home wild rabbits almost daily, but he knew his master's tame ones, and many a romp and rough-and-

tumble they had together on the lawn. Tom's master had a mavis. This bird did not live in a cage, but roamed about the house at its own sweet will; yet pussy never made any attempt to injure it; in fact, seemed to like it. What was most singular, the cat was in the constant habit of bringing in live birds,—sparrows, larks, and sometimes even a mavis, which she quietly devoured beside Dickie, he standing on the floor in front of her, looking on and whistling to himself. Birds being the natural prey of the cat, the foregoing anecdote just shows to what a high state of training they can be brought, and how well worthy pussy is of being trained. There is as much too in the breeding, as in the educating; for you always find that honest cats have honest kittens, and *vice versâ*. Of course it is contrary to nature to expect a cat to live on terms of intimacy with a bird and not sometimes make a mistake.

An old toll-keeper, in Stirlingshire, had a favourite cat and a pet canary at the same time. Living all alone, and having plenty of

spare time, he had the pussy taught to allow the bird to take any liberties with her he chose, and to perch on her back or head whenever he had a mind. Indeed, Dickie was seldom in his cage, when he could be with the cat. Many people came to see them; and to remove all scepticism the toll-man used to open the cage-door, when the bird would immediately fly out, alight on pussy's head, and at once burst into song. One day, when working in his garden, a cat passed Mr. Tolly, apparently in a vehement hurry, with a bright yellow bird in its mouth, and hurried away towards the wood. "Losh!" said Tolly, sticking his spade in the ground and scratching his poll, "that can never be *my* cat sure*ly*!" and "Lord, have a care o' me!" he added; "that can never surely be *my* bird." With a beating heart he rushed towards the house, and there got proof positive it was both his cat and his bird; for the cage-door was open, and puss and Dick had both disappeared. It was a case of elopement, or rather abduction of the most forcible nature. Poor Tolly was now a

very lonely man indeed; for, well aware of the heinous nature of the crime she had committed, and afraid of the consequences, the cat never returned.

"In our city house," writes a lady to me, "we have a fine grey and black cat. This cat is the most honest of creatures, and guards our larder from the predatory inroads of the neighbour's cats. On one occasion a stray cat was observed to run away with a cold stewed pigeon. Our cat rushed after the thief, and with some difficulty induced it to drop the spoil; she then brought the pigeon back and laid it down at its master's feet."

It is by no means an uncommon thing in Scotland, to see a large tabby on a shopkeeper's counter, kept to look after bigger thieves than rats or mice. Some of these animals I have known to especially hate little boys, and indeed to raise serious objections to their being served at all. I remember one cat in particular, a very large and powerful Tom, who used daily to mount guard on the counter, to protect his master's

wares. He used to walk up and down, generally keeping close to the shopkeeper, and his quick eye on the customer. If the latter paid the money down, he was allowed to take up and pocket the articles; but if he put a finger on any little package before paying, Tom's big paw was down on him at once, a hint that never required repeating to the same customer. It is almost needless to say that Tom himself was the pink of everything that was fair and honest; he was never, under any circumstances, known to steal. One day, the merchant had gone for a few minutes into the back shop, leaving Tom sitting, apparently asleep, beside a large piece of butter, which had just been weighed. An urchin, who happened to be passing, seeing the state of affairs—the coast clear and the sentry asleep—determined not to let slip so golden an opportunity; he had a large piece of oat-cake in his hand. He would butter that at least, he thought. He had just got the knife stuck into the butter, when, quick as lightning, Tom nabbed him. Deeply in, through the skin, went the cat's

claws, and loudly screamed the urchin. Tom raised his voice in concert, but held fast, and the duet quickly brought the shopkeeper to the spot. Tom appeared to have great satisfaction in seeing that little Arab's ears boxed.

I know an instance of a cat, which brought home a live canary in its mouth, which she presented to her mistress. The bird was put in a cage, and turned out a great pet; and pussy and the bird were always great friends; the cat one day punishing severely a stray puss that had been guilty of the unpardonable crime of looking at the canary.

CHAPTER VIII.

[*See Note H, Addenda.*]

THE PLOUGHMAN'S "MYSIE."

TEN miles along dusty roads in a hilly country, and on a hot summer's day, was rather fatiguing, and I was glad to find the ploughman's cottage, or rather hut, at last. It was placed in a picturesque little nook, at the foot of the Ochil mountains, and consisted simply of a "butt and a ben," with a potatoe patch and kail-yard in front. The mistress was at home; her goodman, she said, was busy sowing turnips. But she kindly asked me in, and showed me into the best room, with its mahogany chest of drawers, old-fashioned eight-day clock, and bed with snowy counterpane in the corner. While I rested, the good woman produced her kebbuck of last year's cheese, a basin of creamy milk, and some delicious oat-cakes,—a banquet for a hungry king,—and bade me eat, apologising that she had no whisky in the house.

"And so," she said, "you've come a' this lang road to see our Mysie. Well," pointing towards the bed, "yonder she is, sir."

I was certainly a little disappointed. Mysie was a tortoise-shell and white, pretty well marked, but small and with an expression, as I thought, of bad temper about her little face, which just then seemed the reverse of pleasant; but this wore off when I patted and caressed her.

"Is there anything remarkable about her?" I asked.

"Weel, sir," said her mistress, "she can catch mice like winking."

"Cats generally do," said I laughing; "anything else?"

"She's a queer cratur. She has never slept a single night in the house since her e'en were opened, and—— But you're no eating, sir."

I praised the cakes and kebbuck, and remained silent.

"The fact is, sir," she said at last, "*she saved my husband's life* last fa' o' the year. For George is a proud proud man, and

would never accept meal or maut that he hadna worked or paid for.* But he had been lang lang ill; and ae day when I followed the doctor to the door, he told me that my poor man must die if he didna have his strength kept up. 'Flesh and wine,' said the doctor, 'flesh and wine and plenty of both.' Ah! little he kenned. So I put awa (pledged) my marriage gown and ring to get him wine; but we had naething in the house but milk and meal. Surely, sir, it was the Lord Himself that put it into that cat's head; for, that same night, she brought in a fine young rabbit, and laid it on the verra bed;"—the good woman was weeping now—"and the next night the same, and every night the same, for a month, whiles a rabbit and whiles a bird, till George was up and going to his work as usual. But she *never brought onything hame*

* The aversion of the poorer classes in Scotland to receive parochial relief, or to go into "the house," is well known. No man having once done so can—or indeed would be permitted to—hold up his head among his neighbours again.

after that. She's, maybe, no bonnie, sir; but, God bless her, she is unco good and wiser than many a human."

By this time I could perceive no expression on Mysie's face but that of unalterable fidelity and unchangeable love.

"You wouldn't like to part with her, would you?"

"Part wi' Mysie, sir? No for a' the warld's wealth."

So I bade them good-bye, not now regretting my long walk to the Ochil mountains, and the ploughman's faithful Mysie.

CHAPTER IX.

[*See Note I, Addenda.*]

TENACITY OF LIFE IN CATS.

"As many lives as a cat," and "a cat has nine lives," are sayings which we hear almost every day. The truth of the latter we must all acknowledge; not indeed as regards the imputed plurality of lives in the cat, but, as illustrative of the extreme tenacity of the one life she possesses. As an Irishman would say, pussy may be many times "kill't," but only once "kill't entirely;" or, as a Zanzibar nigger would have it, she may be often-times dead, but only once "gone dead."

Joy was a farmer's cat, a beautifully-marked lady-tabby. She was extremely fond of horses, used to jump on their backs, and often sleep there at night. She was consequently nearly always in the stable. One day, however, one of her pets kicked her,—accidentally it is to be hoped, but so severely that one of the men found her, lying cold

and stiff beside the wall. He lifted her up and laid her on the dunghill, until he should find time to give her a decent burial. Here the poor animal lay all day in the sun, and here she was found at milking-time, by a kind-hearted servant girl. Thinking she perceived some tokens of life about it, and remembering the proverb, she took the pussy into the kitchen, and rolling it carefully in a flannel petticoat, placed it in front of the fire. When she came in from milking, she was rejoiced to find that pussy was so much better, as to be able to lift her head and taste a little warm milk. With three days' careful nursing the cat recovered. She lived to a goodly old age, but abjured the turf,—she never backed a favourite again.

Another cat, found in a trap, was cruelly beaten about the head by a brutal keeper, until the blood gushed from both ears. He finally cut off the poor thing's tail as a trophy of his bravery, and left her on the ground for dead. Her mistress, hearing of what had happened, was soon on the spot, and carried home what she thought was

the dead body of her cat. She tried every means of resuscitation, nevertheless, and in three weeks had the satisfaction of seeing pussy as well as ever, and as full of fun; only it was now a Manx cat, an artificial one. Pussy must often have seen her own tail hanging on the game-keeper's wall, in company with a dead hawk, an owl, and a few hoody-crows. The man had the tail frizzed up to make it look big; and pointing it out to many a cockney sportsman, used to relate a story of a dreadful encounter he had with a "real wild cat, sir," which he at last slew; "and yonder," he would always add, "hangs the buffer's tail."

A man going one morning into his dove-cot, which in this case was an attic at the top of a house eight-storeys high, found his own cat killing the pigeons right and left. Greatly enraged, he kicked the animal through the open window. On going down shortly after, rather ashamed and sorry for what he had done, he was greatly surprised to see pussy gather herself up, and slink in at the back door. Apparently she was

none the worse of her rather hurried descent from a height of over fifty feet.

In the case of the cat which the keeper "kill'd," there was no doubt fracture of the skull. In the following case, the apparent death was no doubt due to severe concussion of the brain, or stunning.

A boy in going to school one day, saw a large cat sitting not far from its master's door. Without meaning to hurt the pussy, but with that recklessness of consequences which characterizes most school-boys, he picked up a stone to have "just one shy at her." He struck her on the head, and pussy dropped to all appearance as dead as the stone itself. Afraid of the consequences of detection, he picked the cat up and threw it in a cornfield not far off. As murderers are said to haunt the scene of their guilt, so the boy every morning, for the three following days, found himself irresistibly drawn towards the field of corn, and every morning there lay his victim stark and still. On the fourth morning, however, she was gone; and in returning from school the same evening,

the boy's astonishment was very great indeed, on seeing the identical cat, washing its face at its master's door, as if nothing had ever occurred to annoy it.

Kittens, too, possess the same tenacity of life which is so remarkable in the full-grown cat.

A friend of mine, for example, had a cat which gave birth to a litter of five kittens, four of which were ordered to be drowned. The execution of the sentence was duly carried out, the same evening in a pail of water. When full time had been given to the kits to give their final kick, the pail was emptied on a heap of manure. Next morning, however, all the young pussies were found alive and well in their happy mother's arms. She was allowed to rear them. I do not know what means pussy adopted to revivify her apparently drowned offspring, or I should at once send the recipe to the Royal Humane Society, and patiently wait for a silver medallion by return of post.

I remember, when a boy, seeing a horrid old woman dig a hole in the earth and

deliberately bury three kittens alive. The ground heaved above them, and she clapped the earth with the spade till all motion ceased. The same aged wretch used to toast snails in a little flannel bag before the fire, in order to extract the oil for sprains, and I have often shuddered to hear the snails squeak; but this of course has nothing to do with the subject of cats. I went and told my little sister of the cruel interment; and, watching our chance—we really thought the old woman would bury us if she caught us—we dug up the kittens fully an hour after, and were successful in nursing two of them back to life. We reared them on the spoon.

The following anecdote might, perhaps, have been more properly related, in the chapter on cruelty to cats; however, as illustrative of the subject in point, we give it here. At a certain farm-town, about ten years ago, one of the men-servants conceived a great antipathy to his master's cat. The cat had been guilty of some little delinquency in the bothy, or farm-servants' hall,

for which the man had punished pussy. The farmer had taken his cat's part, and scolded the man, and hence the *casus belli*. The man swore vengeance on poor pussy, whenever an opportunity should occur. Nor had he long to wait; a fast-day came round, and nearly every one had gone to church. The brutal fellow got the cat in the stable, and commenced putting her to death with a horsewhip. This he had well-nigh accomplished, when puss by some means effected her escape. She was unable, however, to make much use of her legs, so he whipped her round and round the farm-steading, until the poor creature took refuge in a hole, which happened to be in the barn wall. This hole was a *cul-de-sac*, having no opening on the inside of the wall. It now occurred to this fiendish lout, that he might easily accomplish pussy's death and burial at the same time, and he forthwith proceeded to build up the hole with stone and lime. The cat was missed, and a whole week elapsed without any tidings of her; and although suspicion fell upon the right party,

there was no proof. A whole week elapsed, when one evening the farmer was standing near the barn wondering if ever he would see his little friend again. Suddenly his eye fell upon the servant's handiwork. That wall, he thought, was never repaired by my orders; my poor cat is buried there. To fetch a pick and tear out the stones did not take many seconds, and then from her very grave he pulled the pussy. Strange to say, she was alive; and though dreadfully emaciated, by careful nursing she got all right again in a few weeks. She had been eight days immured in a cramped position. Only fancy her sufferings.

Some schoolboys, not long since, stoned a poor cat till she fell down apparently dead. Afraid of what they had done, they determined to kill it outright, and bury it in an adjoining field. This they endeavoured to do by dashing the cat's head against a stone fence; not succeeding, however, and being in a hurry to get off, to escape detection a grave was hurriedly dug, and pussy interred. The ground was still moving over her when

the young wretches left. Bad news travels apace; and the owner of poor puss hearing of her favourite's death and burial, hastened to the grave and dug her up. There was still life in her, and by careful treatment she made a good recovery, and was seen about her old haunts four or five days after.

The following case of suspended animation may seem almost incredible; it is authentic nevertheless, and not unaccountable either on scientific grounds.

The owner of a black and white cat determined, for private reasons, to get rid of her. He had not the heart to hang her, or he was not sufficiently enamoured of Calcraft's profession to do so; there was no poison in the house; and as he lived away up in the centre of a hilly country, there was no water, without walking a long distance, sufficiently deep to drown her. Thinking, however, that suffocation, in whatever way produced, was as easy a death as any, he got a small bag, in which he placed the cat, tying the mouth of the sack. He then dug a hole in the garden and lowered her down.

"I'll no hurt ye, poor puss," he said, as he pressed the earth firmly but gently over her; "and ye'll no be lang o' deeing there—God! she canna live wantin' breath." This grave was merely meant for a temporary resting-place; so next morning the man went to open it, with the intention of placing her remains at the foot of a tree. To his surprise pussy jumped out of the bag "alive and well;" well enough, at any rate, to make her feet her friends. That cat thought she had lived long enough, in that part of the country.

The same black Tom mentioned in a former chapter, as guarding his master's wares, and keeping his eye on questionable customers, was certainly very exemplary in his honesty; but as every pussy has one little failing so had big Tom. An egg was Tom's stumbling-block. He could have got dozens of them on his master's counter, but that would have been theft; besides, he preferred his eggs new-laid, and not imported. So, with the intention of ministering to his cravings, Tom used to pay occasional visits to the henneries of the

neighbours. He also had a habit of making a pilgrimage to an adjoining village, and calling at the house of a man called Archie, a weaver and customer of his master's. Archie was very fond of Tom, and always made him welcome. Not so, however, a man called Dan, who lived in the next house. For this man openly accused Tom of stealing his eggs; and there was no doubt some truth in it, for Dan's wife swore she had seen Tom more than once, coming out through the hen-hole in the barn door, with his beard still yellow with the yolk of a stolen egg. Dan resolved to be revenged, and at once set about encompassing the poor pussy's death. He so arranged a bag beneath the hen-hole, that on Tom's going through he would be certain to pop into it, and so make himself prisoner. The first time the bag was set Dan only captured his own cock, the next time a stray hen of a neighbour; but this only made him the more determined; and eventually he was successful. Tom was a prisoner, and condemned to instant execu-

tion by Dan and his wife Bell. Bell indeed was even more bitter against the cat than her husband. Just then pussy's friend the weaver happened to come upon the scene, and hearing what had occurred, and what was about to follow, he pleaded long and hard for his little friend's life, and even threatened the terrors of the law; but Dan was inexorable. Die Tom should, he said, if he himself should hang for it. He "kill'd" the cat by dashing the sack, many times against the gable-wall of his own house. "He's quiet enough now," said Dan.

"Make siccar," said Bell; and she commenced hitting Tom with the spade she had brought to dig his grave.

"You ugly black brute," she cried; "you'll steal nae mair eggs in this warld."

Dan then threw the sack over his shoulders, and accompanied by his wife as grave-digger, and Archie the weaver as chief mourner, they proceeded to the garden to bury the unfortunate Tom. A grave was dug at the foot of a gooseberry bush, and Dan opening the mouth of the sack, pro-

ceeded to shake out the mangled remains of the cat. You may judge of the chagrin and disgust of Dan and his cruel Bell, when those same mangled remains no sooner touched the ground, than they got together again somehow, and springing out of the grave, made their way like greased lightning out of the garden and off. The tables were turned. Dan was chief mourner now.

"Curse the cat!" he roared.

Dan's wife was equal to the occasion.

"You're a fool, gudeman," she said,—and indeed, he did not look much unlike one,—"the cat's the deevil, and you can fill in the grave yersel'."

CHAPTER X.

[*See Note J, Addenda.*]

NOMADISM IN CATS.

THERE are few, if any cats, that can withstand the temptation to occasionally roam abroad, and lead for a while the life of a gipsy puss. Perhaps pussy thinks she has as much right to her holiday, as master or mistress. Home life must at times grow monotonous and irksome, and a change no doubt highly desirable. Besides, cats are of a more social disposition among their species than dogs are. They like to meet and exchange ideas with their fellow cats. Night is the season almost invariably chosen for these social *réunions*. There is then more seclusion, and less likelihood of their being disturbed. They know that dogs stick closely at home after dark, and that little boys are sound asleep. By night, moreover, the voices of the gentlemen who give addresses are more easily heard. Everything else being so still, each inflection and intonation

of voice is beautifully distinct. It matters not that the nervous lady in No. 5. is kept awake till the close of the meeting, and can't sleep a wink after that; that No. 3. can't get her baby to sleep; or that No. 2. is writing a letter to the *Times*, and can't follow out any single idea;—the concert in the back-garden of No. 4. goes on all the same. How sweetly that old tabby cat imitates the harmonies of a bass violin! How grandly that black Tom's voice rises and swells, floats and soars, on the night breeze! How beautifully those five cats in the corner, are imitating the dulcet strains of the great highland bag-pipe! Three of them are told of as drones, the other two do the lilting, and the effect is quite startling. So at least thinks that old bachelor wretch in the two-pair back, who now throws open the window, and rains curses and cold water on the influential meeting, momentarily interrupting the flow of harmony. Only momentarily however.

"Move on a garden or two," suggests black Tom; "that old beast has no soul."

STRIPED, or BROWN TABBY.

First Prize Owned by Miss M. E. Moore.

RED TABBY.

First Prize—Owned by Miss Forshall.

And the concert goes on as before.

Cats are republicans of the rubiest red. Communism is rampant in their ranks; and indeed, they seem to thrive on it. In our day, we hope communism will always be confined to the cats. There is no respect of persons shown among cats. One cat is as good as another; and the sharpest claw and the strongest arm rules supreme for the time. Beauty, rank, and breeding are alike despised. At pussy's balls and assemblies, there is no such officer as master of ceremonies. Any gentleman may introduce himself to any lady, he chooses, provided always she does not spit in his face, and box his ears; for, in this way, the lady never hesitates to express disapprobation of her partner. In so outspoken a community, boredom is thus practically done away with, and there is a freedom from all affectation which is highly refreshing. There you may see my Lord Tom-noddy, whose noble form rests by day on a tiger-skin mat by a sea-coal fire, whispering, nay, rather howling, soft nothings in the ears of Miss Pussy Black-leg, whose mistress keeps a marine

store, at Wapping Old-stairs, and sits up nightly to "wait for Jack." Yet no one can doubt the genuineness of his lordship's proposals, who marks his earnest manner, or listens to the impassioned tones of his voice as he beseeches her to

Fly, fil-ly with him now, ne-ow-w.

The young and beautiful Lady Lovelace, with fur so long and white, and softer than eider-down, with eyes of himmel-blue, who sleeps all day on a cushion of scarlet, and sips her creamy milk from a china saucer, is yonder in a corner, flirting with the coal-heaver's Bob. Bob's ears are rent in ribbons, his face is seamed with bloody scars, he is lame, his fur nearly all singed off, and he has only one eye and half a tail; but his voice, that is what has won the heart of the young beauty; and when the ball is over he will convey her home in the moonlight to her splendid mansion in Belgravia—he himself will be content with an hour's nod in the coal cellar. The pretty pussy's mistress is anxiously waiting for her darling, and will not sleep till she comes. But witness this lady-cat's slyness;

she kisses Bob fondly on the top of the conservatory, then with bushy tail and fur erect, she springs to the bedroom window, and enters growling, and casting frightened glances behind her, and her doating mistress caresses her gently, and tries to calm her fears. "And did the nasty Tom-cat follow my litsy prettsy darling, then? And was it nearly frightened out of its bootiful, tootiful lifie? Ah! pussy, now, then, now."

Sly, sly puss. Is slyness confined to the cat creation, or is it ever found among females of a higher persuasion — female women to wit?

Cats are remarkably fond of comfort, and when the usages of society compel her to be up all night at a ball or concert, she goes to bed immediately after breakfast, and sleeps off every vestige of fatigue.

I knew a cat that used to travel over six miles every other day to visit and have a gossip with another cat for which she had contracted a violent fancy. They were both lady-cats; but, strange to say, I never saw the other cat return the visit.

Cats will often make almost incredibly long journeys, and endure fatigue and hardships innumerable in order to find a lost master or mistress.

One cat I know travelled nearly a hundred miles into Wales, in search of her master, who had gone and left her. She had been three weeks on the journey, and when success at last crowned her efforts, she was so weak and emaciated, that she tumbled down with a fond cry at her master's feet.

The difficulty of "wandering" cats is well known. You may "wander" a dog easily; but not pussy, for if so inclined, she will assuredly find her way back somehow at some time.

You may shut her up in a basket or bag and take her for miles through the most intricate streets, or over a covered country; but in all probability she will be back in a day or two, if indeed you do not find her on the door step on your return.

A gentleman in the neighbourhood of London, before going to reside in the city gave his cat away to a friend. Two years after

she turned up at his city residence; and although very thin and impoverished, manifested great joy on seeing her old master. Whether or not the party to whom the cat had been presented had come to live in London, and brought the cat with him, I do not know; but the story is a fact. Moreover, the cat could not have been taken back on purpose, as she came by the tiles.

There can be no longer any doubt, that pussy possesses some power or instinct which enables her to find her way back, ever so far, to the place where she has once resided, and that too unerringly. We cannot pretend to understand this, any more than we can the principle that guides the carrier pigeon; but true it is, "there are more things in heaven and earth than we dream of in our philosophy."

CHAPTER XI.

[*See Note K, Addenda.*]

"IS CATS TO BE TRUSTED?"

"*Is* cats to be trusted?" was to have been the title of an essay from the pen of poor Artemus Ward. "*Is* cats to be trusted?" my starling has been taught to repeat, and often does so while running round the cat on the floor, examining her tail, opening up her paws with his beak, and occasionally making determined attempts to open up her nose also, and peep down her throat. As far as she is concerned, the bird is I think perfectly safe; for although she often pats him with her gloved hand when he gets too insinuating, she never otherwise attempts to molest him. I fear in his essay Artemus meant to have had a few jokes at pussy's expense. My aim is a more serious one. A question like this, which to pussy is a most momentous one, affecting not only her comfort and happiness, but her standing as a social pet and her very existence itself, cannot be treated lightly in a work like

the present. My own opinion is, and always has been, that if cats are properly fed and cared for, they will do anything rather than steal. But not content with giving my own experience, which some might say was exceptional, I have placed pussy in court, as it were, and given her a long, fair, and impartial trial, summoning evidence *pro* and *con* from every part of Great Britain and Ireland. The trial has lasted for months, and the Tichborne Case, as a Yankee would say, isn't a circumstance to it in regard to the number of witnesses examined. The judgment has been overwhelmingly in pussy's favour, and the verdict of the jury as follows:—

"*Cats are not as a rule thieves, but quite the reverse.*"

In every case investigated, where the theft was proved, it turned out that the cat was either starved, or illtreated, or spoiled. Moreover, the witnesses for the prosecution—in the minority—were, to use a homely phrase, a foggy lot, rude and illiterate, people with no definite ideas about their "h's," whose capitals were sown broadcast, who wrote

"i Know," and spelt cat with a "k"; while those for the defence were in every way the reverse, both socially and orthographically; people with crests and monograms, who wrote on one side of the paper only, and all letters prepaid.

So Miss Puss I think may stand down: she leaves the court without a stain upon her character.

Now, while boldly asserting that cats are as a rule honest, I do not mean to say that all are so. There are rogues among cats as well as among men; but just as we find that the law often makes men thieves, so likewise will cats become thieves if badly treated. What can be more disgraceful than the habit that some people have of systematically starving their cats, under the mistaken notion that they will thus become better mousers; or the custom of many of putting their cats out all night, no matter how wet or cold the night should be. Such treatment of pussy is greatly to be condemned, and only tends to foster habits of uncleanliness, of thieving, and of prowling. By regular

feeding, good housing, occasional judicious correction—when puss is found tripping—and kindness, you may make almost any cat honest.

Pussy does not soon forget having been corrected for a fault.

Black Tom, mentioned in a former chapter, never went back to Dan's hen-house again.

A Tom-cat, called Bruce, lived some years ago, at a farm-house near Dundee. This cat—honest in every other way—could never resist the temptation to steal the cream. All efforts to cure him of this habit were resorted to in vain. But one day, Bruce, much to his own satisfaction found himself shut up in the milk-house. When all was quiet, Bruce came from his corner and had a look round. What a grand and imposing array of basins of milk and tubs-full of cream! One of the latter stood on a table beneath the window, the edge of the tub being on a level with the sill. It was the largest tub in the room; and blessing his luck, up jumped Bruce and began to lick. It was so delicious, and Bruce closed his eyes to get the full

flavour of it. Just then, however, some noise outside startled him,—he knew he was sinning, and was consequently nervous,—and in turning round, he missed his feet, and fell heels over head into the tub. Although half-choked, so soon as he came up, Bruce struck out boldly for the shore, but the sides of the vessel were too slippery even for a cat to hold on to; besides, the weight of the cream clogged his movements. He would fain not have screamed, but death stared him in the face, and the idea of dying in a tub of milk, as he had seen mice die, was awful; so he opened his mouth and gave vent to a smothered yell. That yell, loud-resounding through the house, brought "ben" the good-wife, and Bruce's life was saved at the expense of about three pints of cream; but never more did that cat go near the milk-house. He was a reformed cat from that day; a burning and a shining light to all the cats in the country-side.

I know a cat—a Tom, as usual—who always sits on his master's counter, surrounded by provisions of all sorts, but he

was never known to steal. This cat has a penchant for pickled herrings; and although he might easily help himself by day or night, he always prefers asking his master for one. This he accomplishes in the usual cat fashion, by running towards the barrel and mewing up in his master's face; and of course this appeal is never made in vain.

Cats are remarkably fond of fish. The other day, a bonnie fishwife was standing on the pavement with her creel on her back. Suddenly she was heard to scream aloud. "For the love o' the Lord, sir," she cried to a bystander, "tell me what's that on my back." The party addressed looked about, just in time to see a pussy disappearing round a corner, with a large fish in its mouth. That was what the newspapers would call an impudent theft, and it was certainly a clever one.

If not properly trained and cared for, pussy comes—like the Ladrone islanders—to look upon stealing as a virtue; and no wonder, for she must think it hard to starve in the midst of plenty, and in her master's

house. Besides, there is always two ways of viewing a matter. Out on the coast of Africa, I have often gone on shore—for the fun of the thing—with a party of other officers, to assist in replenishing our larder by the addition of a few fat fowls, a sucking grunter, or a kid of the goats. I rather think we stole them; but we called these little trips, "cutting-out expeditions;" still we swore "'pon honour," and wore our swords none the less clankingly on a Sunday morning; nor would it have been safe for any one to have hinted that we were dishonest.

Just so with poor pussy. She is often tempted by hunger to make a little reprisal. It is vulgar to accuse her of stealing the steak, nailing a fish, or boning a cold chicken, "cutting-out," is the proper term. It is a feline virtue, from the path of which she must be seduced in early kitten-hood, and by good treatment. But poor pussy is often made the scape-goat for the sins of others.

"Mary, bring up those cold pigeons."

"O ma'am! how *ever* shall I tell you? That thief of a cat—"

"The cat must be drowned," says her mistress.

"Oh, no, ma'am! Poor thing! no, ma'am."

It wouldn't exactly suit Mary's book to have pussy drowned. It would seriously interfere with those nice little suppers, she is in the habit of having with Matilda Jane.

"Sarah, we'll have the remains of that cold lamb for supper."

"Oh! dear me, ma'am; I forgot to tell you, the cat has eaten every bit of it. Can open the pantry-door, just like you or I, ma'am."

I should think it could; the cat in this case being an enormous blue Tom tabby, with a stripe round one forearm, and a belt about his waist, and X 99 on the collar of his coat.

The following is the story of a real feline Jack Sheppard. I have no excuse to offer for this cat; I can only say that if he was a thief, he was a *swell at it.*

In a sweet little village not far from the famous old town of bonnie Dundee, lived, and I believe still lives, Peter McFarlane, a shoemaker, and his wife Tibbie; two as

decent old bodies as you would see in all broad Scotland. They were honest and industrious, and, as a rule, agreed, or as the folks say, they both "said one way," except when Peter took a dram, when, it must be confessed, the ashes did at times find their way up the chimney along with the smoke. They had no family but one, —a cat. A fine gentlemanly fellow he was too; dressed in the blackest of fur, and faultless to a degree, barring that he was the biggest thief ever known in the village, or whole country-side. Every one complained of Tom; and, as he got older, his delinquencies were ever on the increase. Allowing thieving to be a virtue among cats of his class, Tom was a saint, and ripe for glory long ago. The butcher, do what he liked, could not save his kidneys,—it was remarkable that Tom never touched the sausages,—he was always content with kidneys, although if none were to be had, to pussy's honour be it said, he did not despise a lump of steak or even a nice lamb chop. Tom was a regular customer

at the fish-monger's; his weakness here being for Loch Fyne herrings,—they were handy; but he delighted also in the centre cut of a salmon, and in half-pound sea-trout. It has even been said, that Tom did not share his custom equally among the shop-keepers, spending too much of his time at the fish-monger's counter; but, as his biographer, I must defend his name from any such allegation. Although it must be admitted he never paid ready-money, still he was never too proud to carry away his purchase. Tom used to enter the poor people's houses about dinner-time, watch his chance, and purloin the meat from under their very noses. Once he lifted the lid from a broth-pot, and decamped with the boiling chicken. This cat was never known to drink water when he could find a milk-pan; nor milk, either, if the cream-jug was at all handy. He was even accused of having sucked the cows; and when hard pressed with hunger, he did not despise a piece of cheese or a tallow candle from the grocer's round the corner. He never

troubled himself catching mice,—chickens came handier; and tame pigeons he found were more satisfying than sparrows. Tom could break in or out of any place, climb anything, and jump—the neighbours all said —"the d——l's height;" I don't know how tall that gentleman is at Dundee, but he must be over twenty feet, for Tom could do that easily, and alight on his pumps. At long-last the cat became so notorious, and the outcry against him so loud and universal, that the shoemaker and Tibbie, yielding to the entreaties of the villagers, resolved to have him drowned.

On a cold winter's night, then, honest Peter and three of the neighbours might have been seen—had there been light enough to see them—trudging along towards the pier, with the unhappy but virtuous Tom in a sack. Arrived at the place of execution, a consultation was held as to how the job should be done. There wasn't a stone to be had, and Peter said he wasn't going to lose his sack; it was bad enough to lose the cat; so it was resolved to take

Tom out and swing him clear off into the water. More easily said than done. Tom was no sooner out of the bag, than by a successful application of tooth and nail, he wriggled himself free, and in a moment more was lost in the darkness. Peter scratched his head, the neighbours scratched their three heads, and they all felt funny and foolish. They determined however not to make laughing-stocks of themselves, so they returned to Peter's house with the joyful intelligence, that Tom was a cat of the past.

Here were the fishwife and the milk-wife, and the grocer and his wife, and the butcher—who hadn't a wife, all assembled to hear the good news; and it was unanimously resolved to celebrate the event by making a night of it; and, although the people of Dundee and round-about are generally glad of any excuse to make a night of it, still it must be admitted that the present occasion urgently called for "cakes and whuskey." So the fishwife brought salmon, the milkwife brought milk,

the butcher brought steak, and the grocer whiskey galore; Tibbie with her best new mutch did the cooking, and they all sat down to eat and to drink and be merry. No Indian villagers, just released from the dominion of a man-eating tiger, could have felt jollier than did those good folks at the thoughts of thieving Tom's demise.

"May the deil gang wi' him," was one of the toasts to Tom's memory.

"And a' the ill-weather," was another.

"If there be," said the fishwife, "an ill-place for the souls o' cats, that black beast 'll hae a hot neuk in't."

"Ay, but," said the grocer,—a godly man and an elder of the Free Church,—"speak nae ill o' the dead, Eppie, but pass the whuskey, and I'll gie ye a bit sang." He sung the death of Heather Jock, which was by no means inappropriate.

"And so the nicht drave on wi' sangs and clatter," and the fingers of old Peter's eight-day clock were creeping slowly towards "the wee short hour ayont the twal," when,—

"Well, neighbours," says Peter, the hypocrite, "we're a' glad the cat has gane we a' his weight o' crime on his sinfu' shou'ders. Let us eat that last pound o' steak, finish the bottle, and gang to bed."

"There is many a slip 'twixt the cup and the lip;" and scarcely had Peter done speaking, when the door opened, apparently of its own accord. The cold night-wind blew in with a ghostly sough, and the candles were extinguished. But lo! on the table, in their very midst, and dimly seen by the smouldering firelight, stood Tom himself, with back erect and gleaming eyes. Never was such kicking and screaming heard anywhere. The fishwife fainted, and the milk-wife fainted, and the godly grocer and his wife fainted, and the butcher—who hadn't a wife at all, fell down on top of the others, for company's sake. But Peter and the three guilty neighbours stood in a corner—dumb. When order was at length restored, and the candles re-lit, the old shoemaker told his true version of the story, and was very properly forgiven. But where was

Tom? Tom was gone, and *so was the beef steak!* And from that day to this, never again was Tom heard of in that sweet little village near bonnie Dundee.

That cat *was* a thief.

CHAPTER XII.

[*See Note L, Addenda.*]

PUSSY AS A MOTHER.

A CAREFUL and fond mother is our pussy-cat. In no case is her wisdom and sagacity better exhibited than in the love and care she displays for her offspring. Weeks before the interesting event comes off, pussy has been "upstairs and downstairs and in the lady's chamber," looking for the snuggest corner or the cosiest closet in which to bring forth her young. In this matter different cats have different opinions. Some prefer a feather-bed when they can manage it, some a bundle of rags, some an old newspaper or humble straw, while others believe the acme of comfort is to lie inside a lady's bonnet or a gentleman's wig. Wherever pussy has chosen to have her kittens, there in that room or closet she prefers to nurse them, and should they and she be removed to another she will persist in carrying her offspring back to the old place, however

comfortable the new bed may be. This proves that pussy like human beings of the same gender has a will of her own.

I know an instance of a cat, whose kittens were removed by her master from the attic in which they were born, to a snug little berth in the barn. The cottage doors were closed against her, but Mrs. Puss was not to be balked, and next morning found her and her family comfortably re-ensconced in the old quarters: during the night she had smashed the attic sky-light, and carried her kittens through one by one. Pussy gained her point and was happy.

I know a lady whose cat has had a litter of *one kitten*. It is her first, and if she had produced ten she could not possibly be prouder of the performance. It is amusing to watch the care and affection she bestows on her "ae, ae bairn."* Her whole heart—I was nearly saying "and soul"—seems bound up in it. She sits and studies it by the hour—no doubt it is its father's image—dresses it at least a dozen

* One only child.

times a day, and whenever she has occasion to go out, she takes this miserable little object of her love, and rolls it carefully in the sofa tidy, so that it may neither catch cold nor come to harm.

When a cat finds out that there is not proper room or convenience in her owner's house for the proper rearing of her family, or that there is some chance of molestation or danger from the inmates, she never hesitates to go elsewhere for the event. She generally selects an out-house, or in the summer-time goes to the woods, but she never fails to return to her old abode, as soon as the kittens can take care of themselves.

Mary is an old, old maid,—an old maid from choice so she tells me,—she could have been married if she had liked. "Mony a harum-scarum ne'er-do-weel," says Mary, "came blethering about me when I was young and bonnie, but I ga'e them a' their kail thro' the reek, wi' their calves' faces and phrasing mou's. Na, ne'er a man gave me a sair heart, and what's mair never shall."

I don't suppose they ever will, for even

the probability of Mary's having been once young seems mere tradition. Besides, Mary has centered all her earthly affections on her cat, and there is every likelihood that puss will live as long as she herself. The old lady apologises for loving it, on the ground that it is "So clean and clever, sir, and catches mice as easy as wink;" and whenever a dog barks on the street, she runs to see that her pet is safe.

Some months ago this pussy gave evidence that she would soon become a mother. Now as the room in which poor Mary resides is only about twelve feet square, it was very evident there was but small accommodation for a decent cat's accouchement. The same idea struck both pussy and her kind old mistress at the same time, and while Mary was busy going the round of her neighbours, seeking in vain for an asylum for her favourite, pussy was absent on the same errand, and apparently with more success, for she did not return. Mary was now indeed "a waefu' woman," for days and nights went past, and no tidings came of puss. Some

evil thing must have happened to her, thought the old lady. Perhaps she was shut up in some lonely outhouse and starving to death; or tumbled down a chimney; cruel boys may have stoned her or drowned her; cruel keepers may have trapped her, or, more likely still, that rieving rascal Rover may have worried her. He was just like the dog to do a deed of the kind, aye, and glory in it; at any rate, she should never see her more. Alack-a-day! and Mary's tears fell thick and fast on the stocking she was knitting, till she even lost the loops, and couldn't see to pick them up again. Marvel not, oh reader, at the old maid's emotion, pussy was her "one ewe lamb," her all she had in the world to love. And weeks went past, as weeks will, whether one's in grief or not, and it was well into the middle of the third, and getting near evening, when lonesome Mary, cowering over her little fire, heard a voice which made her start and listen; she heard it again, and with her old heart bobbing for joy, she tottered to the door and admitted—her long lost favourite. Pussy had

no time for congratulations, she had a fine lively kitten in her mouth, which she carefully deposited in Mary's bed, and made straight for the door again. She was back again in twenty minutes with another, which she gently put beside the first, then she went back for another, then another, then a fifth, and when she dropped the sixth and turned to go out again.

"Lord keep us, Topsy," said old Mary. "How mony mair is there? Are ye goin' to board a' the kits in the country on me?"

But the seventh was the last, and Topsy threw herself down beside the lot, and prepared to sing herself and them to sleep.

It turned out that Mary's cat had taken up her abode in a farmer's hay-loft, fully half a mile from her owner's house; but no one had seen her until the day she carried home her kittens. She had no doubt subsisted all the time on rats and mice, for she was in fine condition when she gladdened the old maid's heart with her return.

You may often observe that if two she-cats are living together, or in adjoining

houses, one always gets and retains the mastery over the other, until that other happens to be nursing, when she in her turn becomes mistress, and her companion is glad to give her a wide berth.

Cats will go through fire and water to save the life of their kittens, and fight to the bitter end to protect them. A dog will seldom dare to attack a cat while she is nursing her young. My own cat actually imposes the duties of dry nurse on my Newfoundland, "Theodore Nero." His finely feathered legs make a delightful bed for them. He seems pleased with the trust too, and licks them all over with his tongue. In Muffie's absence, he lies perfectly still, seemingly afraid to move lest he should hurt them. When they get a little older and more playful, they make tremendous onslaughts on his nose and ears and tail, which the honest fellow bears with the most exemplary patience, for he loves Muffie, although many a wild chase he gives her numerous lovers. He can't bear "followers."

The other day a playfellow of his, a large Irish water-spaniel, looked in at the door just to ask if he would come for a romp for an hour, as the sun was shining, the breakers running mountains high on the beach, and any number of little boys to throw in sticks to them. Theodore Nero was nursing. But Muffie went, and I should think that dog felt sorry he had ever turned out of bed at all that morning. The cat rode him at least fifty yards from her own door, battering him unmercifully all the way. Then she came back, and sang to Nero. Poor Coolin staggered down the road, half blinded with blood, and shaking his beautiful ears in a most pitiful manner; but his sorrows were only half over, for not seeing very well where he was running, he stumbled right upon a clucking hen and chickens. And she gave it to him next. If the cat warmed one end of him, she restored the equilibrium, and warmed the other; so true is it that misfortunes seldom come singly.

Cats have been often known to leap gallantly into the water after a drowning

kitten, and bring it safely to land. A case occurred only a few days ago. Some lads stole a cat's only kitten, and after playing with it all day, proposed drowning it. With this intention they went to a mill-dam, and threw it far into the water. But the loving little mother had been waiting and watching not far off, and, stimulated by the drowning cry of her kitten, she bravely swam towards it, and brought it on shore. I know another instance of a cat, that saved the life of a kitten which belonged to another cat. Her own kittens had been drowned a whole week before, but evidently she had not forgotten the loss; and one day, seeing four kittens being drowned in a pool, she plunged in, and seizing the largest brought it to bank, and marched off with it in triumph. She reared it carefully. The children baptized it Moses, very appropriately too; and it is now a fine, large Tom-tabby.

A poor cat some time since nearly lost her life in the Dee, attempting to save the life of her kitten. The river was swollen with recent rains, and the kitten was in the centre

of the stream; but, nothing daunted, pussy, like the brave little heroine she was, plunged in, and finally reached it. Here her real danger only began, for the current was very strong, and pussy was whirled rapidly down the river. After struggling for nearly half an hour, she succeeded in landing at a bend of the river nearly a mile below. She had stuck to her poor kitten all the time; but *the little thing was dead.*

A family in Fifeshire were about removing to another farm, about four miles distant from the one they then occupied. Part of their household gods was a nice large she-tabby, and being kind-hearted folks, they never thought of leaving her behind; so having found a home with a neighbour for pussy's one kitten, they took the mother with them to their new residence. Next morning pussy had disappeared, and they were just beginning to put faith in the popular fallacy that cats are more attached to places than persons, when back came pussy, and with her her kitten. That kitten, pussy thought, wasn't old enough for weaning, and

so she had gone back all the way to steal it. She was right.

Owing to the peculiarities of his matrimonial relations, the happy father of a litter of kittens shares none of the responsibility, and has none of the care and trouble of rearing them, because he does not, as a rule, reside in the bosom of his family. When he does live with his wife, however, he is never exempted from family duties. And Tom always shows himself a thoughtful husband and loving father. A male cat of my acquaintance was most exemplary in his attentions on his wife at one of the most interesting and critical periods of her life. Made aware, goodness knows how, of her approaching confinement, he not only selected the closet for the occasion, but even made her bed for her, and stood sentry at the door till the whole affair was over. Every morning for weeks he trotted upstairs, first thing, to see if his wife wanted anything, and to gaze enraptured on his darlings. I am sorry to say, however, that this little woman rather bullied her doating husband. If she hap-

pened to be in good humour when Tom entered, then well and good, she returned his fond cry and chaste salute. If not, her brows fell at once, and she let him have it straight from the shoulder. Poor Tom in the latter case used to mew apologetically, and retire. It was Tom's duty every morning to bring in a very young rabbit, a bird, or at least a mouse, and it seemed to be an understood thing that he should bring it "all alive ho!" When he brought it dead, she slapped him. Sometimes he brought a herring, then she slapped him. Indeed, she lost no opportunity of slapping him. She slapped him if he looked fond and foolish at her, and she slapped him if he didn't. One day he was put to nurse the kittens. The kittens commenced an unavailing search for tits among Tom's fur. As a wet nurse, Tom was a failure. He was slapped, and sent off accordingly. Tom seemed to have business that took him down town every day. Whenever he came back, he was snuffed all over and examined to see whether he had been with lady friends. If he had been, then he

was properly slapped. So there was a good deal of slapping. His wife was fond of him, however, for, once, when he absented himself without leave for a whole day and a night, she made the house ring with her melancholy cries. She half killed him when he did return, nevertheless. Such is conjugal felicity.

Although, as a rule, all the duties of maternity seem to end with the weaning of the kitten, still the motherly affection does not die out; and in cases of sickness in any of her children, pussy at once resumes the cares of nursing, as the following little story will illustrate.

Ginger and Josie.

And Josie was Ginger's mother. She was a good mother. There had been originally five, but the others were born to sorrow, and were accidentally drowned; so that all mother Josie's love was centred in her one son Ginger. Ginger, therefore, not only got all the love, but he got all the milk; so he grew up thumpingly and fat. Nothing remarkable

transpired during Ginger's kittenhood. He neither had the measles, nor, strange to say, the hooping cough; and he played the usual antics with his mother's tail that all kittens do, and have done, since Noah's cats' kittens downwards. When Josie found her milk getting scarce, she weaned her son Ginger; this she accomplished by whacking him, and endeavouring to carve her initials on his nose. No doubt Ginger thought himself absurdly ill-used. We have all thought the same on a similar occasion. But Ginger was amply repaid for the loss of his tits, by the mice which his loving mamma never failed to supply him with daily. So he grew up burly, big, and beautiful; and at the age of one year had become a mighty hunter. Then came six long days and nights wherein Ginger never appeared, and poor mother Josie went about the house mourning unceasingly for her lost son. At the end of that time, a pitiful mewing was heard outside, proceeding from the bottom of the garden, and on walking down, his owners, to their dismay, found poor Ginger, to quote his

mistress's words, "in a most lamentable plight, thin to emaciation, and coiled up on the ground apparently lifeless, his fur, once so glossy and bright, now all bedraggled in blood and mud." The cruel keepers had been the cause of Ginger's misfortunes. He had been caught in a trap. For five days, without food or water, had the poor animal languished in a field. On the sixth he had managed to crawl some little way, dragging the trap after him, till he came to a gate. This he managed to get through, but the trap getting entangled, held him fast until some kind Samaritan, seeing his miserable plight, set him free from this impediment. He then crawled home, jumped the wall, and sunk exhausted on the ground, where he now lay. Tenderly was Ginger borne into the house, and laid on the hearth-rug. His leg was broken, swollen, and entirely useless; so it was determined to have recourse to amputation. The extremity was accordingly cut off by the owners, and, although long confined to his mat, pussy lived. Josie was very happy to see her son again, maimed

and bruised as he was, and at once set about performing the duties of nurse to him. She seldom or never left him, except to procure food for him; but Ginger had a regular daily supply of dead mice, birds, and other feline dainties, until he was able to get about and cater for himself. Ginger's accident happened upwards of two years ago. He is still alive and well, and as strong and active on his three legs as other cats are on four. Ginger is a fine, large cat, but has always exhibited the greatest aversion to strangers.

CHAPTER XIII.

[*See Note M, Addenda.*]

HOME TIES AND AFFECTIONS.

Are cats more attached to places than to persons? I have taken considerable pains to arrive at a correct answer to this question, and not satisfied with my own judgment and experience, as in the case of pussy's honesty, I "appealed to the country." I am happy to find that the opinion of all cat-lovers, nearly all cat-breeders, and the large majority of people who keep a cat for utility, is that cats are as a rule more attached to their masters or owners than to their homes. This question then must be considered as set at rest, and a stigma removed from the name and character of our dear little friend the cat. The popular fallacy, that cats are fonder of places than persons, first took its origin in the days, long gone by, when cats were kept for use only, and never as pets; and it only obtains now among people who look upon pussy as a

mere animated rat-trap, and who starve, neglect, and in every way ill-treat the poor thing.

Pray don't mistake me, reader, I am not saying that pussy isn't fond of her home, in fact I am going to prove that she is immensely so; but I most emphatically deny, that she ever allows that fondness, to obscure her love for the hand that feeds and caresses her, or the kind voice of a loving master or mistress.

Six years ago, an intimate friend of mine, who "loveth all things great and small," went to reside for a time with a family in town. A fine blue tabby was an inmate of the same house.

"That cat," said the mistress, "belongs to the family that lived here before, it has been five times removed, and always comes back."

My friend only remained there for six weeks, when he changed his residence for a house he had taken only a few streets off, but when he left, that bonnie blue tabby trotted by his side all the way home, and it *has not returned yet.*

But there is no doubt pussy is extremely attached to her home; and nothing, I think, shows her warm-heartedness more, than her willingness to leave that home with a kind owner. A cat has so many home-ties, that we need not wonder at her unwillingness to change her residence. Custom has so endeared her to the old place, that she cannot all at once like the new. She knows every hole and corner of it, knows every mouse-walk, the cupboards, the cosy nooks for a quiet snooze, and the places where she may hide when hiding becomes a necessity, she is acquainted with the manner of egress and ingress, and is familiar with every sound, so that her rest is undisturbed by night, and her finely-strung nervous system not put on the rack by day. Out of doors, too, everything about the old place is familiar, the trees on which the sparrows perch, the field where she often finds an egg, the distant meadow corner where the rabbits play, and the path that leads thereto, which she can traverse unseen and free from danger, either from farmers' dogs or boys with stones, and above

all, the dear old trysting place, where she knows she can always meet her lovers in the moonlight. But if she changes her quarters, all this knowledge has to be learned over again. New dangers have to be encountered, fresh troubles, and bother of every description. Her new residence, and everything about and around it, has to be thoroughly surveyed, mentally mapped out, and got by heart before she can feel anything like at home. So that if pussy has not the love of a kind human friend, to counterbalance all her trials, it is no wonder she will do anything or walk any length, to get back to the place where she was so happy. And when she goes back, what does she find?

"A change,
Faces and footsteps and all things strange."

She is treated as a stray cat, and sent adrift every time she dares to put her unhappy nose inside the door. But, nevertheless, she will hang about her old home for days and weeks, until, impelled by the pangs of hunger, she casts aside the mantle of virtue, becomes

a thief, and revenges herself on the new inhabitant's pigeons, rabbits, and chickens. *Facilis descensus Averni.* Having once robbed a roost, she would rob a church; so she takes to thieving as a means of subsistence. The way of the transgressor is hard: her coat becomes dry and hard, her ribs stick out; she loses all respect for her personal appearance, frequents low neighbourhoods, keeps low company, makes night "hideous with her howling," and in a general way does everything she can to earn for herself and the whole cat community a bad name; and finally, in a few months—if not sooner by accident—succumbs to disease and dies on a dunghill.

It is with a feeling of deep regret, that even the best-treated cat bids farewell to a place, which has so long been her home. You shall often see poor pussy, after all the furniture and fixings have been packed in the vans, run back and take a walk all round the empty desolate chambers, then return and submit herself to be quietly taken off to her new abode. On arriving there, her very first act will be to make a tour of inspection,

through every room and corner of the house; she will then count the members of the family, and if all she loves are present, if she gets a drink of milk, and especially if there be a good fire, she will at once settle down and begin to sing.

Some time ago, a pussy of my acquaintance was condemned to death for taking a slight liberty with the canary—in fact, she ate him. It was certainly very thoughtless of poor puss; however she suffered for it, although not to the extent that was intended. She was confined in a sack with a large stone, and sunk in the adjoining river. Nothing more was seen or heard of pussy—which, under the circumstances, wasn't considered at all surprising—for a fortnight, when one evening she walked in, and laid herself down before the fire as if nothing had happened. Wherever she had been, the cat had lived well, for she was both plump and sleek. Probably, on escaping from the river, she had thought that a two weeks' holiday in the woods would both benefit her health, after treatment so rough, and give

time for the evil impression which her crime had induced to wear off. If so, she was right; for she was received with open arms, and freely forgiven, and is still alive and well.

A cat will travel almost incredible distances to regain her home.

I know of a cat that, along with her three kittens, was sent in a hamper a long journey across country, to a mill, where it was intended she should mount guard over the rats. Pussy, however, had no such intention; and next morning, to the great surprise of the inmates, she was found sitting at her own door with one kitten beside her. She disappeared that same evening, and next morning returned with another kitten. In the same manner, next night she brought home the third and last, and so settled quietly down to rear her family. This cat, I think, showed great determination, and a knowledge of country that would have pleased Von Moltke himself.

Dozens of such anecdotes might be given, but I will only trouble the reader with one more. There is a river in Scotland called

the Spey; that I suppose is no news. You will also know that this river is celebrated for two things—salmon and celerity, it being the most rapid river in the kingdom. Near this river, on one side, is the farm of Dandilieth; and on the other, but four miles distant, stands the dwelling-house of Knockan. Once upon a time, then, the tenants of Dandilieth were removing to Knockan; and after the household furniture was packed on the carts, a search was made for the household cat. She was found in a corner of the empty house, on some straw, faithfully nursing her family of three blind kittens. A bed was made for her in the lap of one of the children; and in due time all arrived safe at Knockan, and pussy and her family were duly installed in the new house. But pussy was not happy. She longed for her old home at Dandilieth; and to think, with her, was to act; and this she did to some purpose, for on the farmer returning next day to his old place for the purpose of conveying home the farm implements, he was astonished to find the cat in her old corner, and the three kittens safe be-

side her. Now, as the nearest bridge is twenty miles distant, it is quite evident that pussy must have swum the Spey five times in a single night (three times with a kitten in her mouth), to say nothing of the long journeys backwards and forwards between the two farms.

Although of a nature not so demonstrative as that of the dog, still a cat is capable of loving its master or mistress with a love equally strong, if not stronger. "Absence makes the heart grow fonder," may certainly be said with regard to pussy.

"Don Juan," says a lady, "is a beautiful dark tabby, with back almost black, legs ringed like those of a tiger, short ears honourably scarred by various encounters with rats, stoats, etc., which he has succeeded in killing; long tail, also ringed with tabby; rich tabby shirt, around which there are beautiful rings of black and tabby; paws with black pads—a most loving and lovable old cat. Two years ago we left home for a 'parson's week,' during which time the house, pussy included, was in the charge

of servants. The first sound which met us upon opening the garden-gate on our return, was a most pitiful scream from poor Juan, who recognized our voices and came bounding across the garden to greet us. For more than a week he could hardly be persuaded to leave us, but spent his time in purring and rubbing round us, as though to assure himself of our presence."

"My own cat," writes a lady correspondent, "although greatly petted by its master, appears quite wretched whenever I go on a visit. After mewing piteously at my door for a day or two, it leaves the house, often remaining away for weeks; but his delight at seeing me, the fond rush towards me, and his song of joy are very pretty." The same lady gives an account of a venerable old tortoise-shell puss, who goes to sea with its master,—officer in an East Indiaman,—and keeps watch with him by night or day in all weathers. No wonder he is fond of her.

I know an instance of a cat that was very strongly attached to a boy. When this boy was sent to a distant school, pussy, after

mourning for him several days, took to the woods and never returned.

There is surely strong proof of how deeply a cat loves its owner, in the anxiety and sorrow it evinces on seeing that owner in grief or in pain.

I have an instance of a cat that is extremely attached to a little boy. This young gentleman has very great objections to having his nails cut. Whenever this necessary operation is being performed, he sets up a howling which very speedily brings his faithful playmate pussy to his aid. She comes running with all speed, and growling in unmistakable anger. She jumps on his knee, and after giving him one hurried kiss and embrace, as much as to say, "Be of good cheer, I shan't let them hurt you," she wheels round and stands on the defensive; and the nurse has to retire and wait for a better opportunity.

Another cat is extremely attached to a little girl, whom she follows about wherever she goes. When the child comes to grief, in some of the various ways incidental to early years, pussy does all she can in her humble

way to pacify and comfort her, rubbing herself round her and caressing her, and saying, "Oh! oh!" in the same fond pitying tone she uses to her kittens.

I was called the other day to see a lady in a hysterical fit; and it was most affecting to witness the grief of her poor cat. Hearing her mistress's screams, she darted into the room, and at once threw herself on the lady's breast, licking her neck and hands and face in the most passionate manner, stopping only occasionally to look about and growl fiercely at me, as if I had been the cause of her mistress's illness.

The following anecdote shows, I think, in a very marked manner, how deeply attached pussy can be to her master, and how forgiving is her nature.

Robert D——, a young man of nineteen, lived in the same house with his mother and sisters. He was by no means an exemplary youth. In fact, if he had had his due, the ravens, according to Solomon, would have made short work with his eyes. He had early taken to habits of dissipation, and was

in the constant custom of bullying his poor mother, for money to continue his debauches. He must have had some little good in him however, for he was fond of his mother's beautiful black cat. Not so fond, however, as pussy was of him; for, poor thing, she never seemed happy save in his company. One morning he was leaving his mother's room after an unusually stormy scene, when pussy met him at the top of the stair, running towards him with a fond cry, and singing as she rubbed herself against his leg.

"Curse you!" he cried, and kicked her to the door-mat. The look the poor cat gave him would have softened a less hard heart; in him it only roused the innate devil.

"You're like the rest," he shouted; and, seizing the unhappy puss, he dashed her with all his force over the banisters. The poor creature was not killed outright; but was so severely wounded that she died in three hours. Although bleeding all the time, and evidently in great pain, never a cry escaped her, only a low moaning mew. For one moment only she brightened up a

little, when her hard-hearted, but still loved master came in to see her before she expired. She even tried to sing, apparently anxious to show she had forgiven him; and actually died licking his hands.

I know the case of an old gentleman, who was extremely fond of a very pretty cat he had; and pussy loved her master dearly. Indeed, cats seem always particularly partial to the aged. They love to sit beside them at the fireside, and soothe them with their low, murmuring song; for they seem to know by instinct that age is but a second childhood, with only the grave beyond. The gentleman in question died at an advanced age. Every one missed and mourned him, but none so sincerely as pussy. She never sung again, and nothing could induce her to leave his sitting-room. She would sit and gaze for hours at the vacant arm-chair, as if she couldn't understand why her eyes no longer beheld him she loved. This went on for a fortnight; then one morning poor pussy was found lying stiff and dead on the hearth-rug. She had died of grief.

I may close this chapter with another similar instance of pussy's affection for a kind master.

He was an old fiddler, who dwelt all alone in a cottage on a moor. He had lived to see friend after friend laid under the sod, and now he had none on earth to care for him. Ah! yes; he had one friend—his cat. This little pet cheered him in many a lonely hour; and when sickness came at last, she never left his bedside. Then he died. She sat like a dazed creature as she saw him lifted and placed in his coffin, and she followed the loved remains to their long home, and saw where they laid him. She never left that churchyard living. For three days she sat on the grave; and it would have made your heart bleed, reader, to have heard her pitiful cries.

"Oh!" she seemed to say to every passer-by, "he is here—my master is here with all this load of earth on his breast. Will no one come and help me?"

On a cold sleety morning in November she was found stretched on the grave—in a hole she had scraped—*dead.*

Has this gentle and affectionate creature met her master? Is there no hereafter for pussy? The sun of her sinless life set in sorrow.

"Alas for love! if this be all,
And nought beyond an earth."

CHAPTER XIV.

[*See Note N, Addenda.*]

FISHING EXPLOITS.

Cats are, as a rule, averse to water in every shape. If every one of us were as much afraid of getting damp feet, there would be much less coughing in church and theatre. Parsons might preach in peace, and actors rant undisturbed. It would be a bad thing in a business way, however, as far as the medical profession and their friends the undertakers are concerned; for, if the former did not work with additional zeal, many of the latter would starve. Did you ever observe a cat crossing the street on a rainy day? How gingerly she treads, how carefully picks out the driest spots, lifting each fore-paw and shaking it with an air of supreme disgust, and finally, for the last few yards, making a reckless bolt to the front door.

Pussy is a very dainty animal, cleanly in

the extreme, more particularly with regard to her personal appearance; and knowing better than any one that fur once wet is very difficult to dry, she does not care to dabble in the water like a duck or a Newfoundland dog. But let the occasion arise, either in the pursuit of game or in some case of necessity, and she at once throws all her scruples overboard, and goes overboard after them, wetting both feet and fur with a will.

In *Cassell's Magazine* lately, there is related the story of a cat, that was in the constant habit of diving into the sea, and bringing out live fish. This is told as a great curiosity; but I can assure the reader that such things are by no means rare. I have known of hundreds of such cases; and they are occurring every day.

Joe, a nice she-tabby, was a curious specimen of the feline fish-catcher. Her master was a disciple of Walton's. With eager and joyful looks, pussy used to watch him taking down the rod and fishing-basket, sit singing beside him while he looked to his tackle, and

rub herself against his leg while he prepared the invariable sandwich, as much as to say, "Don't forget a morsel to your puss; she likewise is going a-fishing." Then she would trot by his side all the way, as proud as Punch, to the distant streamlet. Anxiously she would watch the skimming fly, squaring her lips and emitting little excited screams of delight, whenever a fish rose to nibble. Then, when a trout was landed, pussy at once threw herself upon it and despatched it. At other times, she would spring into the stream, perhaps up to the neck, and commence fishing on her own account, by feeling with her paws below all the banks, working as hard and as eagerly as any bare-legged school-boy.

A gentleman tells me, that he once possessed a cat that made a regular habit of swimming across the river almost daily, for the purpose of killing birds in a wood on the opposite side.

Gibbey was a fine, large, brindled Tom. He was a noted fisherman and a daring and reckless poacher, so much so that the game-

keepers threatened to kill him, whenever they could catch him. They did not mind, they said, his taking a good clean sea-trout occasionally; but the beast fished in season and out of season. In fact, Gibbey found the spawning time much more convenient than any other. When the salmon came up the shallow streams to spawn in thousands, all waggling under his very nose, and to be had for the mere lifting out, he couldn't stand that.

"Tam tint his reason a'thegither,"

and played terrible havoc among the poor fishes. It was not so much what he ate that the keepers grudged; but he was in the constant habit of carrying away large fish to hide for future use; and as he generally forgot where he had put them, he still went on hiding more. Sometimes, in taking a walk through the wood, you would find yourself suddenly sprawling on all fours, having trampled on one of Gibbey's salmon. Or you are doing a little bit of gardening, and come upon a grave, and turn up what at first sight appears a newly-born infant rolled in a rag. Only one of Gibbey's salmon. What is

this in the horse's trough? Has the horse conceived? Nay, the poor brute has eaten all his oats, but he could not stomach—one of Gibbey's salmon. Something has been making its presence felt in your bed-room for days. You dream of drains and typhoid fever, and you sprinkle Rimmell's toilet vinegar and burn pastiles in vain. Even the immortal Condy fails to lay the dread thing. At last you peep below the bed, and with the tongs pull out—what?—only one of Gibbey's salmon.

For nine long years this cat managed to evade the law, and escape the itching fingers of the keepers. At last, however, poor Gilbert was trapped and slain.

One day, when out shooting, I met a large white cat. He was coming trotting along the foot-path, and wore about his neck what I took to be a very tasteful thing in cravats. It was of a dark colour, and he held one end of it in his mouth in a meditative sort of way. I was going to ask this cat if he felt afraid of catching cold; but he appeared to shun me, took another direction, and entered

the door of a small cottage, still wearing the mysterious cravat, and still keeping one end of it thoughtfully in his mouth, so that I felt quite puzzled, and laid down my gun to scratch my head. I hate to be done. Five minutes afterwards I was at the cottage door. A pleasant little woman answered my knock.

"Might I trouble you for a glass of water?"

"Certainly, sir; but would you not come in, and have a drink of nice sweet whey?"

I would. Tom was singing on the hearth, but he had laid aside the wrap—it was nowhere to be seen.

"That's a fine cat you've got," said I, when I had finished my whey.

"He is, sir; everybody admires our Tom."

"He has caught cold, I think?"

"Dear me! no, sir."

"A little sore throat, perhaps?"

"No, no, Tom was never better in his life."

"Then, my good woman, excuse me if I seem rude; but why—why on earth does he wear a cravat out of doors?"

"A cravat!" cried she. "Our Tom wear a cravat!"

Then the pleasant little woman laughed till her pleasant little sides shook and the tears ran out of her pleasant little eyes; and her laughing was so pleasantly infectious that I was constrained to join her, and we both laughed till roof and rafters rang again. It was pleasant, though I did not know what I was laughing at; only I had a slight inkling that somehow or other I had made a mighty fool of myself. When at last she did get a word out, it was,—

"Oh! sir, you're an *awful gowk*.* It was an *eel*."

An eel, was it! The cravat was an eel! And I was "an awful gowk!" Well, I always guessed I was; but then she said it so pleasantly, and as soon as she said it off she went again. I thought it was time I was going off too; so bidding her good morning, I did, and left her laughing—such a pleasant little woman!

Millers' cats in the country are, almost

* Gowk—a cuckoo, an animal of little sense.

without exception, fond of taking to the water in pursuit of prey. I know an instance of a cat bred and reared at a flour mill: it was a universal custom with this pussy to watch by the dam-side, where she might have been seen at any time either in winter or summer. She used to run along the edge of the water in full tilt after a trout until it stopped; then, seeming to take aim for a few seconds, she would dive down like an arrow from a bow, and never failed to land the fish. She was also great in catching water-rats, which she seized and killed as eagerly and speedily as any English terrier would.

But not only can cats swim and fish, but they have been known to teach their offspring to do so; and a knowledge of the gentle art has been transmitted in some cat families down to the third and fourth generation.

At the mill of P——, in Aberdeenshire, some years ago, there lived a cat, an excellent swimmer and fisher, and as fond of the water as an Irish spaniel. When fishing,

she did not confine herself to any one portion of the stream; and whether deep or shallow it was all one to pussy. The boys, too, of the neighbourhood were not long in finding out, that, by whatever part of the rivulet they saw the miller's cat watching, there they would find trout in greatest abundance.

This cat not only fished herself, but taught her children to do so too. The way in which she managed this was very amusing, and shows how extremely sagacious feline nature is. When the kittens came of sufficient age, she would entice them down, some fine sunny day to a part of the stream, where the water was very clear and shallow. Here the smaller trout-fry and minnows would be gambolling; and, making a spring, pussy would seize one of these and bring it out alive. After letting it jump about for some little time, to amuse the kittens and attract their undivided attention, she would kill and return it to the stream, jumping after it and playing with it in the water to entice a kitten in. Thus, in course of time, the kit-

tens could all swim and fish, and rivalled even their mother in quickness and daring.

If space permitted, I could give many more instances of pussy's fishing exploits; but I think I have said sufficient to prove, that they are not so averse to wet their pumps as some people imagine. I have a fine tom-kitten which I intend training to catch fish. The future adventures of this kitten will be related in the *Animal World*.

CHAPTER XV.

THE ADVENTURES OF BLINKS.

A Tale of a Kitten, in Ten "Mews."

Dramatis Personæ.

1. Blinks—the son of Muffie.
2. Muffie—the mother of Blinks and queen of cats.
3. Pretty Dick—a starling who speaks oftener than he is spoken to.
4. The Ogre—The Author.
5. Theodore Nero—champion Newfoundland.
6. The Cricket of the Hearth.

Mew I.

The Birth of Blinks.

The entrance into the world, of the immortal hero of the following adventures, is veiled in the darkest and most inky obscurity. Whence he came, or where he had resided previous to his arrival, no one can tell. All that is positively known about the matter is

this: I, the writer, retired to rest about ten by the clock on a cold and sleety night in winter. Previous to jumping into bed, I, as usual, locked, barred, and bolted the door of my room, then, candle in hand, I peeped in below the bed, keeked into the cupboard and under the toilet-table, and even cast an eye up the chimney, in order to be certain there were no robbers or midnight assassins concealed in the premises. Being satisfied that the only occupants of the room besides myself were Nero, Muffie, and Pretty Dick, I extinguished the candle and crept quietly beneath the sheets. Now at that time there was *no* Blinks. Well, in the morning, like a good old boy, I awoke at seven; and after rubbing my eyes and untying my flannel night-cap, I put my hand once more below the bed-clothes, for I could distinctly feel something moving on my breast. I seized and hauled this something forth to the blessed light of day, and lo! and behold!—Blinks—blind little Blinks!

"Good heavens!" cried I in astonishment, for the windows were fastened, the door still

closed, and the key-hole not unreasonably large, "where in the name of all creation did you come from?" And Blinks replied in a whisper; but I could not catch what he said.

Now, from some concomitant circumstances —namely, the birth of five kittens on the evening of the same eventful day—all of whom were consigned to a watery grave next morning, as soon as they had taken breakfast—I say from these circumstances, I think there can be little doubt but that Blinks is the son of my beloved cat and faithful servant Muffie; and that the name of his other parent is, and must ever remain, a mystery. Blinks was a lovely kitten, and is a lovelier cat. Of the brightest and most varied tortoise-shell, with stately limbs and bushy curling tail, he stalks abroad, a very prince among the feline tribes. His paws are white as mountain snow; and when he presents one to a human friend, it feels as soft as the finest velvet. But woe be to the mouse, or rat, or rabbit, on whom those paws descend, for sharp and deadly are the daggers hidden between those

silken toes. His ears are long, his brow is broad, and his eyes beam with intelligence; love seems to float in their liquid depths as he purrs to some fair young lady cat, but fires of hate and scorn flash from them as he gazes on a feline foe. Such is Blinks.

Mew II.

Blinks's Eyes.

When another week had glided slowly away, and the earth—this world into which Blinks had been so unceremoniously thrust—had made seven somersaults and was preparing for the eighth, Blinks, who was gently reclining in his mother's arms, opened his little red mouth and whispered—

"My ma!"

"Yes, my chee-ild," Muffie replied.

"When will I get eyes? Ever, my Ma?"

"Yes, my chee-ild."

"When, my Ma?"

"On the ninth day, my chee-ild," said Muffie. She spoke in a mournful tone of

voice, for she had not yet ceased to lament the untimely fate of her other five children.

"Oh my eyes!" cried Blinks, not heeding his mother's grief, "won't it be a jolly lark!" and straightway he sucked himself to sleep.

Strange, is it not, that any mortal creature should sleep without any eyes to sleep with; but so it was, Blinks slept.

Mew III.

Blinks opens his Eyes. His first thrilling Adventure.

The ninth day dawned, a day to be big with the fate of the young and innocent Blinks, who was on that auspicious morning to open his eyes for the first time, on a world that, heretofore, had been as dark to him as if he had been living in an empty stone bottle with the cork in, or like a frog in a buried teapot, or like a toad in a stone. This day the cork of the bottle—so to speak—was to be drawn, the teapot dug up, the stone to be broken. He had innocently asked his mamma, where the eyes were to

come from; and she, in the beautiful imagery, which only Muffie could make use of, told him that a wee angel cattie, with snowy fur and wings all golden, would fly gently down while he slept, and, hovering over him softly insert a little bright eye on each side of his head, and by-and-by he would awake and—see.

Well, the sun rose,—the bats and the owls all went to roost in haunted castles and lonely groves, cocks clapped their wings and crew, hedgehogs fell asleep among the dewy grass, and weary authors went to bed; but Blinks like one of the ten foolish virgins, slumbered and slept. Why slumbereth our hero? Blinks had determined to lie awake the whole of the preceding and eventful night, in order to meet the first glimpse of the early dawn with open eyes, and study the wonders of nature with his newly acquired sense of sight. I say, this is what Blinks *had* determined to do; it isn't by any means what he *did* do, for long before the shadows of night had begun to battle with the light of coming morn, poor weary

Blinks's eyes—only half open—were sealed in sleep, and so he slept far into the day. His fond mother had eaten her matutinal meal and lain down again to watch him; Nero had had his breakfast and a long walk with his master; the starling had been piping and chattering from an early hour; carts and cars and carriages had been rolling and rattling past; trains had shrieked, and puffed, and stopped, and backed, and puffed, and gone on again; and still Blinks was slumbering.

A very prolonged scream from an express train awoke him at last, however; and our young hero sprang to his feet, gave a jerk with his brows, a nod of his head, and behold! his eyes, like the eyes of Adam and Eve, were opened; and, like Tam o' Shanter,

"Vow! he saw an unco' sight!"

Strange, too, that at the same moment one of Her Majesty's ships, that lay in the bay, began to fire a salute of twenty-one guns. [Blinks here bids me say there was nothing strange about it.] No wonder then, that Blinks thought himself lord of the universe

and monarch of all he surveyed; no wonder —a pair of real eyes and a salute of twenty-one guns. Ho! ho!

Funny-looking eyes they were too; light grey and glassy, and with scarcely any visible pupils or centre-bits. Blinks stood for a moment, evidently in a very undecided frame of mind, like one who has too much to do and can't tell where to begin. He appeared to be looking very earnestly, and inquiringly at nothing in particular, and was withal rather shaky about the extremities. It was only for a minute however, for, on turning his head on a pivot, his eyes fell on the well-pleased and admiring face of his mamma, who had paused in the very act of washing her face with a spittle or two, that she might gaze on her youthful prodigy. So intent, indeed, was she, that she did not even lower the fist she had been licking; but sat with it raised in an attitude of such grace and beauty, that, had it been done in the theatre royal, would have brought down the house. Now, although Blinks had had a long and intimate acquaintance, with his

mother's honest face, it must be remembered that he only knew her by the touch or feel; and not having *seen* her before, how should he, Blinks, be expected to tell who or what she, he, or it was that now gazed on his face?

"Might it not," thought Blinks, "be some dreadful foe? Good heavens! might it not be a *wild mouse?*"

The thought was certainly alarming enough, and he determined to, at once, act on the offensive; so, as a commencement of hostilities, he gave a warlike leap backwards, "in order," as he afterwards remarked, "to make the spring the more dreadful." This backward leap did to be sure cause him to lose his balance. [Blinks here begs me to substitute the word "equilibrium" for "balance," as the latter is not soldier-like, and reminds him of shop-keepers and such.] Having found his balance ["Beastly!" says Blinks,—who, as I write, is sitting on and looking over my shoulder,—"beastly English! Can't you say, 'regained his centre of gravity,' you dolt."] Well, well, Blinks got on his pins again; then was his back erected like unto

a Gothic arch, on which the hair did bristle like unto a fretful porcupine, or a cheap ham; his tail was transformed into a miniature bottle-brush, and from his jaws came a sound, intended to be at least awe-inspiring, but which an impudent author might liken to the striking of a lucifer-match. All this was but the work of a second, and only preparatory to a grand spring—a spring which, it is needless to say, would have resulted in the total demolition of all good looks in the face of his worthy parent. But, just then, struck with admiration at the pluck of her son, Muffie burst into a song of praise.

Blinks listened.

He closed his eyes, and listened again.

"That voice!" he cried, "them music!—it is—it is my ma."

"My chee-ild! my chee-ild!" cried the fond parent; and Blinks, in the twinkling of —of—of a little star, was encircled by the hairy arms of his dear dam with a tit * in each hand, and one in his mouth.

* Tit—pap.

Then, and not till then, did pretty Dick say, "Bravo! bravo!"

Mew IV.

Further Adventures of Blinks.

After the dreadful adventure related in chapter third, exhausted nature coveted nutrition; that is, Blinks felt thirsty, and for the suck-seeding [succeeding] sixty minutes, Blinks was busily engaged discussing a dinner of *tit*-bits. He wandered from one tit to another, and from the other tit to the next, and so on to the last, and then back again to the first.

Couldn't he stick to one tit? "No, sirree!" Blinks would have réplied, "the foremost tits contain butter, the next cream, the next sweet milk, and the last whey. My brethren and sistren should have got the whey—they should, but then my brethren were drowned in the sistren [cistern]—good joke, that, for a nine-days' wonder. Eh?"

Having at length satisfied the cravings of

nature, and filled his belly [Blinks fainted when he heard this expression, and on reviving bade me, try again], well, then having laid up a little store of the lacteal fluid, against further claims for sustenance, Blinks carefully put aside the skim-milk tit, as a thing all very good in its way, but which a hero 216 hours old, and with real eyes, ought to despise. He laid it past, and wheeling carefully round on one end, stood up, staggered for an instant, and finally reopened his new organs as wide as he could, and stared right in front of him, apparently with no very decided intention of what to do or how to do it. Just then there fell upon his listening ears—he had two, one for each eye, and was very proud of them too—a sound which made him start and turn red, so to speak, with indignation.

"Was it possible?" he mused. "Did his ears deceive him? Did he hear a laugh? A laugh! nay, even a sneer, a low snigger."

He gazed steadily in the direction from which the noise seemed to proceed; and "dang his eyes" if it wasn't repeated,

wantonly repeated, daringly done again; and evidently the insult was aimed at him, for there, not many miles away, at most, were two great round goggle eyes a-glowering at him over a book, and a horrid great fleshy face all round them, with tufts of bristly hairs hanging from the cheeks, and a mouth with lips from which again came the sneer—the low insulting snigger.

Now Blinks, in the days of his darkness, had often heard the same despicable sound; and Blinks's mamma called the voice Master.

"What!" thought he, "Blinks have a master! Blinks, the nine days' wonder! Blinks, with two real eyes! But, dash those same two eyes! the thought was slavish. No, he wouldn't give a suck for himself if he would bear it; and then that laugh, that snigger—come, he would at once go on the war-path, find out this ogre which his mamma, —the old idgit [idiot]—called master; and demolish for ever, and crush into the minutest smithereens, the mouth that dared to sneer, the lips that dared to snigger. Dash his eyes if he didn't, that was all."

"Walking *was* difficult, though," so Blinks continued to muse and talk, "over a confounded rug too. *Would* his ma kindly take her stupid, awkward-looking stump of a tail out of his way? So-ho-oh! Gently! Hang it all!"

With this last exclamation Blinks tumbled off the rug, fell three long inches through the air, and screamed lustily for his ma.

"My ma! my ma!" roared Blinks.

"My chee-ild! my chee-ild!" cried his ma, "I am with thee, my chee-ild;" and he was forthwith carried by the nape of his warlike neck to his downy bed, and—happy thought—he would have a drink, and then ask his ma to get him a little golden carriage, with four white mice as horses, and a boy-mouse in buttons behind. For why? *He*, Blinks, was never made to walk, nor meant to walk, nor did he mean to walk; for it was mean to walk, and he couldn't, wouldn't, shouldn't. So from thinking Blinks came to dreaming; then he once more slumbered and slept, while his mother, sitting over him, nodded and sang.

Mew V.

The Ogre. Blinks Goes Abroad into the World.

But it was fated that Blinks should not slumber long; he was soon awakened by the rattling of plates; or, to speak more poetically,

> The deafening din of dindling delf,
> The clinking clang of knife and fork,
> As some poor wretch regaled himself
> On early greens and roasted pork.

He gazed in the direction of the sound, which seemed to him like the noise of fifty bulls and a corresponding number of steam-hammers turned loose in a china-shop. The goggle-eyed ogre was feeding himself. His huge form was perched aloft on a wooden erection supported by four massive pillars. In one hand he held a large knife, bigger than Blinks's body; in the other he grasped a mighty trident, and our hero gazed in mute and mewless astonishment, at the immense shovelfuls of mash, and the tremendous lumps of sodden flesh the gigantic monster made disappear down his maw, and the oceans of coloured water that went gurgling

down his gullet. Then began Blinks to reason with himself and commune with his own thoughts, after the following fashion: "The world must be rid of such a monster, the Herculean labour must fall on him—Blinks. Would he flinch? No! Perish the thought! And then, had he better slay the ogre at once, and mingle his blood with his Irish stew, or wait until he had gorged himself." The latter plan, after much deliberation, our young and hairy hero determined to adopt; for and because, no doubt, and to wit, in all probability after the ogre had eaten his fill, he would give a grunt like a satisfied mother-sow, give a grunt, tumble down in a corner, and sleep for a fortnight; and Blinks swore by every hair in his (Blinks's) whiskers, he never again should wake in this world.

His mind being now fully made up, Blinks carefully washed his face, using up two spittles for that purpose. He had thought of having a bath; but then that would have taken time and ten spittles, and he was in a hurry, and deliberating had dried his

mouth. He then lowered himself gently over the edge of the rug, and, for the first time in his life, stood alone in the world. Many and varied were the sensations that stole over his innocent mind, as he stood for a moment to gaze wonderingly, admiringly around him. The words of Byron came to his lips,

> And now I'm in the world alone
> And eating kitchen-fee,*
> Why should I not the butter bone?
> For the d——l a mouse I see.

"Now," said Blinks, "I will go abroad upon the surface of the earth, and walk about to and fro like a roaring lion seeking whom I may devour."

"My chee-ild! my chee-ild!" cried his fond and doating dam from the rug.

"Your grandmother!" answered the irreverent son.

"Stay, oh! stay," exclaimed his sorrowing parent, catching a fly and swallowing it in her anguish. "Stay, my too sensitive chee-ild, and recline your little head on this here hairy bosom."

* Dripping = kitchen-fee.

"Which is much too hot to be happy," said Blinks.

"Oh! stay with me," continued Muffie. "Will you not be the prop of my declining years?"

"Never a prop," quo' Blinks.

"Then," said the parent, "I myself abroad shall go."

But Blinks was off, crying, "Not for Joe."

Mew VI.

A Terrible Sight.

Carefully advancing one foot a time, our young hero slowly made his way across what appeared to him an interminable desert. The ground was soft and mossy, and here and there clusters of mighty pillars (which he afterwards found were called chair-legs) towered skywards. He passed a great many strange things, and heard a great many strange sounds that he could not tell the meaning of; at last he arrived at the foot o

a tall iron wall (the fender ?), round which he waddled for many a feline mile; but finding no gate at which to knock, he resolved to scale the barrier and solve the mystery. So he raised himself on his hind-legs, thinking at the same time how handy hind-legs were, and how happy he was to possess such appendages; then he gazed over the wall. The sight that was presented to him, would have turned a hero less brave into whinstone. But Blinks was Blinks.

It appeared to be a great blazing volcano, surrounded, or rather ribbed in, by gigantic bars of steel; in fact it looked like a small bad-place, in which he had no doubt the souls of dogs, and the gizzards of birds were getting purified of their sins. On the top thereof was a mighty cauldron, and the steam therefrom rose in dense clouds, and disappeared in the blackness of darkness; and there was much smoke and flame, and a loud spluttering noise, accompanied by hissing and crackling. And lo! even as he gazed, a mighty ball of fire was thrown out by a small and ugly fiend, that dwelt below the

cauldron in the midst of the ardent element; and the ball of fire fell within a whisker-length of our gallant Blinks, who just then remembered that he was getting thirsty, and could spare time to gaze no longer. So, after casting one defiant glance at the ugly little fiend that crouched beneath the cauldron, he left the little Hades and journeyed on in quest of adventures.

Mew VII.

The Cricket of the Hearth. Pretty Dick.

Blinks had not travelled many legs (leagues ?) till he was met by a very funny little ill-shaped gentleman. He was like a very wee mahogany table, but not much bigger than Blinks's mamma's red nose (if *it* had been a mahogany table); and he had two big nippers hanging down in front of him; and Blinks observed that he also had too small black eyes like the points of as many needles, and very shiny they were, and altogether very knowing and wicked-looking.

Blinks stopped, and the little mahogany gentleman laid a dead fly on the ground, and did the the same.

"Ho! ho! Mr. Fluff," said the latter, looking up at Blinks with one eye and shutting the other, as if he had no immediate use for it, and thought that one was enough for the occasion. "Ho! ho, Mr. Fluff; so you're learning to crawl, are you? Eh? Does your mother know you're out? Eh?"

Blinks was highly indignant at this style of address, and also at being called Fluff, so he replied with considerable dignity,—

"I am not Fluff, sir; I am Blinks, *Blinks*, sir; and I may inform you, sir, that my maternal relative is entirely cognisant of my being abroad, sir."

"Blinks, are you?" said the little fellow, not at all abashed. "Blinks! He! he! he! a pretty Blinks *you* are. Let me see you." And the small brown gentleman commenced running round him so quickly, that Blinks, in trying to wheel on a pivot, fairly rolled over on his back; and the man of mahogany was forced to hold his sides with laughing.

"He! he! he—e!" he laughed, and "Ha! ha! haa—a!" and "Ho! ho! hoo—o!" and then "He! he! hee—e!" again; and then "Oh dear!" he cried "I shall split;" and the tears ran out of his needle points and down over his nose and nippers.

To say that Blinks was angry, would but poorly describe the torrent of wrath that raged within his youthful breast. After carefully gathering himself up again, he confronted the wee brown gent, and——

"Sir," cried Blinks, "imp or devil, tell me who you are and where you dwell; and should it even be in yonder evil-place, beneath yon horrid cauldron, a friend of mine shall wait upon you in the morning."

"I," said the mahogany one, drawing himself up to his full height, which was not much after all—"I, sir—I am, sir, the cricket of the hearth, sir! the cricket—of—the—hearth, sir; and I have a good mind to pull your nose, sir;" here he shook one pair of his immense nippers; "and the nose, sir—" here he shook his other pair of nippers —"of the ignorant old lady, your mother,

who allows her fluffy fools of children, to trespass upon, and insult grown gentlemen on their own policies." The little gent would have added much more; but just then he was interrupted by a loud voice, apparently in the air, making the remark—

"Bravo! br-r-ravo! bravo!" And looking up, Blinks espied a very large bird perched on a high wooden erection; the cricket of the hearth was observed to turn very pale at the same time. I say, he turned pale; and he also turned tail, and muttering, "Fire and fury!" made off as fast as six legs could carry him.

"I'll fluff you," cried Blinks; and was about to give chase, when the bird alighted on the ground in front of him, and almost at the same time the cricket disappeared, as suddenly as if he had vanished from the face of the earth; and indeed that is precisely what he had done.

"Why," said Blinks, "what has become of our little mahogany friend?"

This question he put to the bird, who was now standing in a very ludicrous attitude,

with his head and neck all awry, and a big swelling or lump in his throat, as if he had been improperly hanged.

"Did you hear me?" said Blinks, as the bird made no immediate answer and appeared slightly convulsed.

"Ca-can't—you—see," said Pretty Dick; for it was no other, and he spoke with great difficulty—"can't you see—I'm—chic-chu-choking?" at last getting out the word and straightening his neck at the same time. "I ate him—bravo! Pretty Dick, whew, whew, whew;" and he burst into the "Sprig of Shillelah" and finished off with two bars of "Duncan Gray."

"Good heavens!" cried Blinks, standing aghast, "did you real—you don't mean to say that you positively swallowed him, you know?"

"Positively, damme," said the bird. "Tse, tse, tse, whew, whew, whew; hurra, hurra, hurra! Bravo, Dick! He is now engaged turning over the stones in my gizzard and counting them; I fear I am two or three short. After that job is finished, I shall

bring him up again, break him in pieces, and eat him properly. Whew, whew, whew! Bravo, Dick! Sugar, snails, and brandy! Tse, tse, tse!"

"Monstrous!" said Blinks.

"Is the darling starling pretty, snails?"

"Sir?" said Blinks.

"Yes!" said Dick.

"I thought you spoke," said Blinks.

"Oh no," said the bird, "I often talk to myself. What is that between your toes?" So saying, the bird hopped up to Blinks, and separating his toes with his beak in a very rude manner, he gazed between them.

"Don't do that again, if you please," said Blinks.

"Certainly not, if you desire it. Cock-a-doodle-doo, sugar and brandy, pretty darling; but what is that in your nostril? Sugar, snails." And before our hero was aware, the starling's bill was inserted, opened like the toes of a compass, and the nose of poor Blinks nearly torn open. This was too much of a good thing; and Blinks aimed a cuff and fired a lucifer-match at the bird,

causing that gentleman to spring quickly backwards and ejaculate.

"Hurrah! hurrah! you rascal! Love is the soul of a nate Irish snail, you rogue." After which he brought up the poor cricket again; and he, glad to see day-light again, said, "Thank you, sir," and was moving off.

"No, you don't now!" said the bird, seizing him by the hindermost leg. "How many stones in my gizzard, you unhappy little wretch?"

"Mercy, mercy!" cried the cricket, "I entirely forget."

"Then down you go again," said the starling; and down the cricket went.

Blinks stood gazing, horror-stricken, when the bird, piping a few bars of a tune, wheeled suddenly round, and made a determined effort to compass out Blinks's eye.

"Is that an eye?" said he, as if he didn't know.

"Rather," said Blinks, a little proudly.

"Then give us a bit," cried Dick. "Chickey, chick, chick; whew-w-w, whew, whew. Snails and brandy! Pretty starling! bravo!"

"Do you know," said Blinks, "it strikes me you're a fool."

"No I ain't," said the bird, "only a foolosopher—always gay, you know. Love is the soul of a darling pretty starling; but I say, you know, you and I will be excellent friends, and you shall play in my cage, and I will give you sugar, snails, and brandy. Quack, quack, quack. Don't be frightened, it's only my fun; and now I must be off, master will want me to sing to him after dinner. He has just finished his sucking pig; he plays the fiddle and I sing. Just fly up with me on the table; but, oh! I forgot, you awkward creature," — digging Blinks in the ribs,—"you haven't the vestige of a wing; well, my master——"

"The ogre?" said Blinks.

"Bravo!" cried the bird, "just you call him an ogre, and he will soon have a new string to his fiddle."

"What do you mean?" inquired Blinks.

"Why," said the starling, "he has a pretty little box called a violin, filled with the souls of defunct cats, your brothers

and sisters are all there,—and their insides are made into strings, and stretched all over; and when he tickles the strings with a hair, they all cauterwaul. Master sings, and pretty Dickie sings—Chick, chick, chick; chirl, chirl, chirl. But, snails and brandy! I'm off." And away flew the beautiful bird, who was all shiny with black and blue and silver; and Blinks sat for quite a long time gazing up after him with his lack-lustre eyes; and then, getting to his feet, he commenced walking homewards, musing on all the strange things he had seen and heard.

Mew VIII.

Terrible Adventure with a hairy Snake.

Blinks's ma lived away in a corner, on a rug of large dimensions; and he had a very long way to walk over the trackless plain, over the pathless desert, over the bounding prairie; and night too was beginning to creep down, and Blinks thought he could perceive enemies lurking in every corner,

and monsters hiding in every shade; so that, had he been anything less than Blinks, he would certainly have thought it worth while being afraid; but being Blinks, he marched bravely on, only just by way of caution he gave an occasional glance over his right shoulder, then one over his left, then one behind, all the while keeping a sharp look-out ahead. Happening to look round, to his astonishment he beheld something like a snake, with its head reared high in the air, apparently following his every footstep. This caused Blinks to quicken his pace. He soon looked round again. The creature, whatever it was, was still there, waving its head from side to side, and evidently looking at Blinks with all its might; although never an eye it had at all that he could see.

"Then," thinks Blinks, "I'll spring smartly round and seize it."

No sooner said than done; and brave Blinks jumped suddenly about and attempted to catch the snake—which was twice as tall as himself and covered with hair—by the throat. But the creature was too wide-

awake, and when Blinks turned round, so did it. So round and round spun Blinks, and round and round went the hairy serpent, and always kept directly in our hero's rear,—when he stopped it stopped, and when he went round again it went round again. At long last poor Blinks began to feel dizzy; but he was much too brave to think of giving in, till, finally, he tumbled on his back, and then the snake peeped up between his hind legs,—that is, Blinks's hind-legs; for serpents never have hind-legs, by any chance.

"Ho! ho!" says Blinks, "Mr. Sea-snake, I'll have ye now, without any more going about the bush." So saying, he caught the creature by the end, just where his eyes would have been had he had any,—he caught it, and bit it; and as he did so, Blinks himself uttered a sharp cry of pain, and bit the snake again, and then cried again, and licked the part of the snake he had bitten tenderly with his tongue; this went on with great vigour for a length of time. At last Blinks desisted, and—

"Well, I'm jiggered," says he, "if it isn't

a part of myself I've been a-running from, and a-fighting with, and a-chewing at, all the time. How provoking! and I don't know any bad words, else wouldn't I swear! Memo: to make my ma teach me to say bad words."

"Bravo! Brr—r—ravo!" cried pretty Dick, who, perched on a stool, had been watching all the performance with singular interest.

"Bravo yourself," cried Blinks, indignantly; but he felt very foolish nevertheless.

And that was how Blinks came to the knowledge that he possessed, that very useful and ornamental appendage called a tail; and that extremity was ever afterwards viewed by him with great interest, and treated with the utmost respect,—Blinks conducting himself with conscious pride and dignity, as behoves an animal of the feline persuasion who is possessed of two eyes, and is followed about, wherever he goes, by a living, moving, gracefully-waving tail.

Mew IX.

Daring ascent of a Volcanic Mountain.

After another half-hour's walk Blinks arrived at the foot of a great black mountain, all covered with rank black grass. The mountain had much the resemblance of a huge lion couchant.

"Seems a long way to walk round," said our hero; "I'll even go over, and I'll get a fine view of the surrounding country from the top." So saying, Blinks mentally girded up his loins, and began to climb. It was very steep, and very high, and he had to pause many times to take breath; but he cast no longing lingering look behind,—that wasn't *his* nature. So he muttered, "Excelsior," putting a great emphasis on the "r," which is the pet letter of the feline race. After much toil and trouble, he stood on the highest peak of Mount Black;—and, St. Mary! what a scene burst upon his astonished eyes. The sun had gone down behind the distant window-frame; but the ogre had just lighted two moons, and placed them conveniently on the

end of brass pipes, for which kind action Blinks postponed his execution *sine die*. Everything was thus rendered nearly as bright as day. As far as his eye could reach, nothing was visible but the flowery prairie, the ogre's legs, and the great beams supporting the universe. The view was bounded by flowery walls, which, he doubted not, was the end of the world, while far away in a corner, the well-pleased and foolishly-affectionate-looking face of his mamma looked up from her rug. She spied her son, even at that distance, and turned up the white of her breast to lure him down.

"The old idiot," said Blinks to himself, "how *can* she be so ridiculous and unromantic? Would Livingstone's mamma do that to her son, if she espied him far away on the Peak of Teneriffe? No!"

Blinks was gazing skywards, and thinking that if he were spared to return to his native rug, he would write a book that would astonish the weak nerves of the tea-guzzling universe, and beat all creation, when he began to fancy he could hear a low rumbling

noise beneath his feet, and perceive a slight heaving motion in the body of the mountain. He bent down and listened. Yes! there it was;—there could not be a doubt of either fact; and, terrible thought! he stood on the summit of a living volcano. But he did not fear; nay he even caught himself singing for joy; but in a moment his joy was turned to very particular grief, and his wonder to something as nearly akin to fear as the heart of a Blinks could beat time to.

"For," says Blinks, "isn't it rising I am? Isn't it bigger and bigger the mountain is getting?"

There was no longer any question of it at all; and Blinks hurried down the side of the mountain as fast as four legs could carry him; but judge, if you can, of his astonishment to find that the hill itself had four legs, as well as he himself had; so that unless he could manage to creep down one of these, he would have to leap through the sky, down—down—down to the vast plain below. For a moment only he stopped to think, to bring all the wonderful powers of his great mind to

bear upon the terrible situation; but just then his deliberation was brought to a speedy conclusion; for, wonderful to relate, the whole head of the hill turned about, and looked him directly in the face with a pair of eyes as big, so thought he, as fish-ponds; while at the same time a great cold nose was thrust right beneath him, and he was hurled headlong to the plain below, and the volcanic mountain —which cats, jealous of the immortality of Blinks, have since averred was nothing else but the ogre's large dog Nero—shook itself and walked away to the other end of the boundless prairie. And Blinks confessed, many days afterwards, that at that moment, though by no means afraid, he would not have undertaken to say whether his head or heels were uppermost. After all, no wonder; for at that precise moment Blinks lay on his back, and the world consequently had an up-side-down look about it.

Mew X.

The Ogre. The Baptism of Blinks.

It might have been thought that the trials and adventures of Blinks were now at an end for one day; but, no,—he had still another to add to the list. He had come through fire and earth and air; he was now to come through water. One other weary mile he had yet to wander, ere he could lay his war-worn head on his mother's breast; and this mile he was engaged placing behind him, when, suddenly, and ere he was aware, a gigantic hand was laid upon him, and he was carried swiftly through space, wheeled quickly round, and immediately found himself face to face with—horror of horrors!—the ogre.

"Ho! ho! my little gentleman," so spoke the ogre; "you've been and gone and got a couple of peepers" (that is what the ogre termed Blinks's eyes, such desecration of terms can scarcely be credited, but it is indeed true),—"a couple of peepers, queer blue-grey blinkers they are too; so, so, you must be baptized, then."

It may be observed here, that although our hero had got a name, the ceremony of baptism had not yet taken place. The ogre then pronounced these remarkable words, swinging our little hero through the immensity of space at every word, and finally plunging him feline fathoms below water, in a dark wooden-bound lake of murky water (bucket?).

"In the name—of your father—and your mother—and your sister—and your brother—who all—made a living—in the—software line—I baptize you Blinks."

Down, down, down, did the ogre plunge Blinks, and the dark waves, cold and cruel, closed remorselessly over his head. Then did Blinks gasp,—he gasped, he spluttered and spluttering spat, kicked violently, and kicking, sunk into insensibility. When he revived, he found himself in the hairy arms of his loving ma, who was licking his wet and shivering body with loving tongue. Blinks soon dried; then tired out, war-worn, and weary, he sunk to rest with a tit in his mouth, while his mother crooned over

the following song, taught her by *her* mother,—Blink's grandma,—in the happy days of her playful kittenhood.

THE THREE THREADS.

(*Tune,* PURR—WURR-R-R,—PURR—WURR-R-R.)

Hirple, dirple, dirrum dum,
Three threads and a thrum,[1] *
The wee bit mousie
Made a housie,—
Made a housie in a drum;
Scraped a hole,
And made a housie,—
Made its housie in a drum.

The three threadies and a thrum,
If ye canna sing, ye just maun hum;[2]
When the mousie sleepit,
Pousie creepit,—
Creepit slily to the drum;
Popped a paw in,
Clook't a claw in,—
Clook't a claw in the mousie's wum.

Och, hey, how, hum,
Three threadies and a thrum:
If ye canna sing, ye maun be mum.
The mousie grat,[3]
The cattie spat,
And hauld the thingie frae the drum:
It winked its eenies,[4]
Like heads o' preenies,[5]
Gave ae wee cheep and syne[6] was dumb.

Fee, fa, fi, fum,
Cheer up my dear, and look na glum:[7]
I bit off its heed,[8]
I lickit its bleed,[9]
And gnawed the beanies[10] beside the drum:
Just three sips,
And I lickit my lips,—
Lickit my lips, and then said "Num!"[11]

"Tinkle, tankle, tingle, tum,
Weel, weel, and isn't it rum?
There is nae musie in the drum,"
The manie cried,
When he spied
The mousie's holie in the drum.
"But deil gang wi' it,
That I should greet,[12]
It'll mak a very decent lum[13]
Wi' three threads and a thrum."
Thrum, thrum, thrum, thrum,
Three threads and a thrum.

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* *Glossary to above.* 1, *Thrum*, a bit of thread. 2, *hum*, sing low without words. 3, *grat*, wept. 4, *eenies*, little eyes. 5, *preenies*, small pins. 6, *syne*, then. 7, *glum*, melancholy. 8, *heed*, head. 9, *bleed*, blood. 10, *beanies*, small bones. 11, *Num!* Nice! 12, *greet*, weep. 13, *lum*, chimney-pot.

CHAPTER XVI.

[*See Note O, Addenda.*]

HUNTING EXPLOITS.

CATCHING mice is, to a proper-minded cat, a mere parlour pastime, only to be resorted to on rainy days, or of a night when too restless to sleep. It stands to pussy in the same relation that indoor croquet, billiards, or reading a book in bed does to our noble selves. Rat-catching is only just one degree better, and principally enjoyed by cats who have not reached maturity in body and intellect—cats, in fact, in their hobble-de-hoy-hood. To the matured cat,—especially if highly bred,—belong all the joys and excitement of the chase a-field. There is as much difference between the hunting of an animal of the cat-kind and that of one of the canine order, as there is between the skilled tactics of German warfare, and the wild rush to battle of Arab cavalry. There is more

honesty in the one, more craft and cunning in the other. A dog is singularly destitute in what is called in Scotland, "canniness." He also wants patience; but the cat, armed with this gift, combined with cunning, and skill gained from experience, is master for anything in the field which she considers game and chooses to square her moustache at. Even to a human being, stalking one's prey is infinitely more engrossing than the mere hunting of it. The latter is pleasing, certainly, but the former is charming. Pussy prefers the charming, while our friend the dog merely runs down his prey, and takes little pains to show skill even in that.

Leaving rats and mice along with blue-bottle flies, in the category of mere kitten's play, pussy's game-list includes hares, rabbits, stoats, weasels, water-rats, and moles, besides everything that flies or has feathers, from the humble household sparrow to the black-cock of the mountain. Not before a cat reaches maturity—viz., three years of age—does the propensity for out-door hunting become a passion with her; but once

imbued with it, the desire never leaves her as long as she can run.

Pirnie is a little female pussy, belonging to a labouring man. At the time I write, she is over twenty years old; but hale and hearty, and as playful as a kitten. She is a perfect adept at catching all sorts of vermin, but more particularly goes in for mole-catching. When she spies a mole-hill, she at once sets herself down to watch it; nor will she raise the siege for hours, until the little gentleman in velvet gives signs of his presence by casting up a few grains of earth. Then is pussy's opportunity. She springs nimbly on the bank, and plunges her arms up to the shoulders into the earth, and never fails to bring poor molie to bank; and the daylight has hardly had time to dazzle his eyes before he is dead.

Last year Pirnie—being then nineteen years of age—had a thrilling adventure with a large hare. The hare, which was at least double the size of pussy, had been enjoying a quiet nap during the heat of the day, in a field not far from the house, when Pirnie

stumbled across its trail, and on following it up the battle ensued. "The hare," says my informant, "fought with great vigour, and often floored her antagonist; but Pirnie sent in her claws and teeth, till blood flew like rain, and fur like drift (driven snow); and the hare soon becoming exhausted, Pirnie seized it by the throat, and its plaintive screams were presently hushed in death."

Graysie was a tom-cat, and rather famous for his hunting exploits. One day, Graysie, being on the war-path, encountered a very large weasel, and it was at once mutually agreed to try conclusions in a fair stand-up fight. The battle was witnessed by Graysie's owners, and lasted the greater part of the afternoon, and ended triumphantly for pussy, in the defeat and death of the weasel. When Graysie found out that his fallen foe was indeed dead, he took it up in his teeth, and carrying it home, deposited it on the front-door steps, intending it no doubt as a present for his mistress, as well as a trophy of his own prowess.

A cat never springs on her prey unless

sure of catching it, and her aim is most unerring. I know a cat that killed over a score of large rats in one day, and on one of these she sprang from a height of no less than twelve feet.

I counted one day no less than 350 mice which a cat had killed single-handed at the removal of a rick of oats in a farmer's yard. He was a fine, noble, red tabby, and it was quite a sight to see the surprising strength and agility with which he worked. He killed most of them with his paws, seldom putting a tooth in one. Every time there was a lull in the flow of vermin, he took the opportunity of clearing the ground of the slain, which he carried to a convenient distance and placed all together in a heap. When all was over, to see honest Tom set himself down in front of this heap of carnage, and thoughtfully and complacently contemplate his bloody handiwork, would have been a study for the great Landseer himself. But not one of his slain victims did Tom eat. Indeed, high-bred cats seldom care to eat mice unless they are very hungry; they

much prefer fish to anything else, and the flesh of birds they consider a greater luxury than even that of rabbits.

Solomon, or Habakkuk, or Nebuchadnezzar, or some great Hebrew authority, says, "Coneys are a feeble folk." Doubtless they were so in those days, and taken singly so they are in our day; but combinedly they are powerful indeed, as many a poor ruined farmer can testify. They are very wise too, and this wisdom is especially displayed in the number of doors they have in each of their dwellings; so that should an enemy, in the shape of a pussy, or a ferret, pop in at one door, Bunny would just pop out at the other. I knew a cat in the Isle of Man—she had no tail worth mentioning—who used to make this very habit of the rabbits a means of securing her prey. She used to enter one hole suddenly, and as suddenly reappear stern first. Of course, Bunny by this time was scampering off to the opposite hole, and there at the door pussy would nab him just as he came out.

Cats almost invariably bring home their

prey to be either leisurely eaten, given to their kittens, or presented to their owners.

A man in Banffshire rented a small farm from a game-preserving laird. This man was ruined by rabbits, and turned out of house and home by them. They first ate up all his oats, his grass, and turnips, so that only potatoes could be grown on the place. By-and-by they took to eating the stems of even those as soon as they appeared above ground, so that all the poor man's live stock was reduced to one in number, namely, a big tabby cat. This cat throve upon the foe. She also took a few youthful prisoners, whom she brought home to play with and amuse a fine family of kittens, which she had in the cottage garret. These young rabbits lived and grew, and burrowed and made nests in the thatch. It was the awful row this happy family used to make every night which first led to the discovery. When the farmer found out one night the cause of the disturbance, he came down and awakened his wife and—

"Jane," said he, and he looked almost sub-

lime as he stood on the cold damp floor with a penny candle in one hand, in rather scanty shirt-tails and red Kilmarnock night cap—he was a study for a Rembrandt, "Jane, I've been a duffer too long. Those rascally rabbits—they've eaten up everything we have out of doors, now they've stormed and taken our castle. By-and-by they'll eat the bed from under us, then they'll eat ourselves; but, Jane, to-morrow morning I'm off,"—this he said self-sacrificingly,—"I'm off, Jane, to the lands of America." And the good people went, leaving pussy and the feeble folks, in undisputed possession of house and farm.

Gamekeepers do all they can to destroy the life of poor pussy by setting traps for, and shooting her wherever met. But some cats come to know all about the treacherous wires and how to avoid them. They know too that hares and rabbits often fall into these snares, and accordingly they turn this knowledge to good account; and when they find a half-strangled animal in the gin, they quietly despatch, and if possible carry it home.

Cats are great enemies to birds in the

breeding season; but it is surprising with what terrible fierceness even the smallest birds will defend their nests from the inroads of predatory cats, whose evil intentions are thus often frustrated.

Pussy has many enemies to contend with on the hunting-ground.

A poacher, the other day, was returning home in the grey light of early morning, when he observed a large fox coming in his direction, with what the man took to be a hare over his shoulder. The man fired, and Reynard dropped. His burden was a fine large cat. Poor pussy had been promising herself a nice plump rabbit for breakfast; the fox thought he should like a fine healthy cat for a change. "There's many a slip 'twixt the cup and the lip;" and the poacher's gun brought matters to quite a different conclusion.

I know a case of a cat that returned from hunting, with two moderate-sized but full-grown rats in her mouth, and *both alive* and staring. They were no doubt sitting cheek-by-jowl when pussy made the spring.

If I tell the reader of a cat that is so clever that she can catch swallows on the wing, I suppose I may be allowed to close this chapter in peace. It does seem a little yankee-doodlish I confess, but it is nevertheless a fact.

At the foot of a certain post-master's garden, flows a stream in which his cat takes many a good salmon-trout. This stream is spanned by an old-fashioned turf-covered tree-bridge, without any parapet. On this bridge crouches this sagacious cat, and often secures a swallow, as it skims out from under. That's all.

CHAPTER XVII.

[*See Note P, Addenda.*]

COCK-JOCK AND THE CAT.

Cock-Jock, as he was called, was the most famous of a famous breed of cocks, our family had possessed for many years. Descended from the black-cock of the mountain, with plumage like jet, save one bright spot of crimson and gold on each wing, short stout legs, and strongest of spurs, he had never met his match in field or pit. Many a brave but unfortunate bird he had stood upon, and crowed over, as he trampled out its last breath. I am speaking of twenty years ago, when cock-fighting in private was still a favourite pastime, with many otherwise sensible and honourable men, in the far north of Scotland. Cock-Jock possessed in the highest degree, all those princely and chivalrous qualities, for which animals of his species and breed are so justly celebrated. He was a perfect gentleman after his own fashion.

He never would touch a morsel of food himself, until every member of his large harem had filled her crop; and thus his own share was at times small enough. If two hens quarrelled, and had recourse to their nebs, he used to peck them both, time about, until they desisted; he then gave them a sound rating, pointing out to them in forcible language, the extreme impropriety of such conduct among ladies of a well-regulated harem. Cock-Jock went to roost every night with his old mother—how beautiful is filial piety!—on one side of him, and a large white hen, his pet wife, on the other. Then he always crowed at the proper time and place; never, under any circumstance, would he mistake moonlight for morning, as some foolish brutes do. Dogs he especially disliked. He used to steal a march upon them, pretend to be busy eating, till he turned their flank, then, before the poor dog could say "wow," he had two inches of spur in each hip; and that tickled him. He was very affectionate, and tame enough to eat from your hand; but if you dared to go near or

molest a hen, he would assuredly lame you for a month. Once upon a time, when a little bantam cock was sick, Jock never went to roost for weeks, but took the bantam to a nest and nursed it under his wings, as a hen would a chicken, and tenderly fed it daily till it grew well again. I knew a great deal of what that cock said, for the language of the lower animals is by no means difficult to understand. His remarks had reference principally to his food, its quantity and quality, his wives—their virtues and vices, and to his battles. He always backed himself to win. He used to ask every human stranger he met, in a manner not at all calculated to give offence, if he mightn't have "just one shy at your shins." He one day offered me a snail. He came a long distance out of his way too to give it to me. He offered me the delicious tit-bit with much ceremonious tick-tucking, and in quite a patronizing manner, as if, like old King Thingummy, I had advertised for a new pleasure, and he was about to introduce me to it. I'm sure I hurt his feelings by refusing it. But I couldn't help it. I think I

could eat a snail now, if hard pushed, although I am told they taste "a little green." But after one has lived on Navy weevils for many years, one isn't so particular; but I was very young then.

I remember a gentleman's satin hat being blown off near to his cockship. I wouldn't have been that hat on any consideration. Heavens! how he battered it, and tugged at it, and tore it; finally he jumped on it, and crew *over* it and *at* the owner.

"Twenty shillings," cried that unfortunate, "thrown to the winds! Curse the cock!"

Jock looked at him, as much as to say, "Perhaps, sir, you would like to come a little nearer, and repeat that expression." But the gentleman didn't. He preferred going home bare-headed.

I one day met a poor woman carrying a large stuffed cock. Like the cheeky brat they called me, I induced her to come and show the thing to Jock. She did so. Jock very soon laid bare the bird-stuffer's art. Cotton-wool and wires and all went to leeward. Jock had never met with so curious a foe in his life

before, and he treated him accordingly. My father came. Jock crew. The woman wept, and I ran and hid.

One fine summer's day my sister left a pillow in the garden. We were all in the parlour. Presently it came on to snow apparently, and the room got darkened. We soon discovered that it was not snow-flakes, but feathers. My father said, "In the name of all creation!" My mother put on her glasses, and remarked, "Every good thing attend us!" Then we all took umbrellas, and went out. When, half choked, we reached the garden, we discovered a clue to the mystery. Cock-Jock had spied the pillow, and could not resist having one kick at it. One kick led to another; and when the eider-down began to come out, Jock lost his temper, and went at it with a will. He had some extra animal energy to expend that morning, and he did it—so successfully, too, that for a whole week never a bit of work was done about the place. The horses had a holiday, and we had cold mutton every day, the servants being all engaged culling the feathers

from the grass and trees, and picking the fluff from the flowers.

Now to Cock-Jock was granted the honour of walking about wherever he pleased—a privilege which was denied to the members of his harem, and it was on the garden walk the battle took place which I am about to describe. Gibbey, my father's famous red Tom-tabby, had a saucer of milk on the foot-path, with which, although he did not drink it himself, he did not choose that any one else should meddle. The cat and the cock had always been on friendly terms till now; and being thirsty, and presuming on this friendship, Cock-Jock walked half-apologetically up to the saucer, and dipping his beak in to fill it, raised his head to swallow it. It was just as his eyes were thus turned heavenward, that Master Gibbey sprang up—he was always too ready with his hands—and without taking his gloves off, struck honest Jock a sound slap on the ear. The cock shook his head; but knowing he was in the wrong, he did not get angry yet, but attempted to reason with the cat. For Cock-

Jock had this peculiarity: he never lost temper at the first blow from any creature he thought he was a match for. A strange bantam—and we all know how plucky and self-important they are—once alighted on Jock's dung-hill, and immediately struck at him.

"Avast heaving, my little friend," said the big cock, or words to that effect; "you must be aware that I could knock you into the minutest smithereens in the twinkling of a foretop-sail."

"Oho!" thought the bantam, "you're afraid, are you; take one for your nob, then," and he struck him again.

"Hang it all, you know," roared Jock, now fairly enraged. He gave the bantam one blow; and where that bird was sent to has never been ascertained to this day, never a feather of him being found. And so Jock attempted to reason with the cat.

"Cock a ro-ra-kuk? What does this mean, Master Gilbert? I own to having been in the wrong; but a blow, sir—a blow!"

He hadn't long to wait for another either

—this time without the gloves; and then, as the Yankees say, his "dander riz." The cock hopped nimbly over the saucer, and the battle began in earnest. Cock-Jock "showered his blows like wintry rain."

But pussy adroitly avoided them all, and returned them with such practised precision and skill, that the poor cock's pretty head was soon a mass of blood and gore. Jock, getting confused, held his head ground-wards, as if fighting with another cock instead of a cat, thus giving Gibbey all the advantage. The fight had now lasted fully five minutes, and as yet pussy rejoiced in a whole skin. I was beginning to think it was all up with the cock, when, crunch! the advantage came at last,—one stroke with that murderous spur, and Gibbey was stretched among the flowers, to all appearance dead. Cock-Jock bent cautiously down, examined him first with one eye then with another, and then, apparently satisfied, he jumped on his side and crew loud and long. But Gibbey did not die. He was out of the sick-list in four days;

but he ever after gave the cock a wide berth, and plenty of sea-room. Poor Cock-Jock! he died at last on the field of battle. His life was literally trodden out of him by a band of hostile turkeys. Superior weight did it.

CHAPTER XVIII.

[*See Note Q, Addenda.*]

NURSING VAGARIES.

The cat, unlike most animals, seems singularly exempt from the pains of parturition. "In sorrow shalt thou bring forth," was never meant to apply to pussy. In fact about this time she always appears jollier than at any other, apparently looking upon the whole business as a capital lark—a rather enjoyable practical joke. My own cat, Muffie, invariably gives due notice of the coming event, by some of the most wonderful specimens of cantation I ever listened to. In fact she becomes a small opera in herself, chorus and all. Her song, moreover, is interlarded with little hysterical squeaks, as if she were brim-full of some strange joy, and running over. At the same time she lavishes more caresses than usual upon Nero, who, not knowing what to make of it, looks very foolish indeed.

Cats eating their Kittens.—Numerous in-

stances might be cited of cats eating their kittens as soon as born. These are curious examples of mistaken affection, and may be put down to a species of feline mania, somewhat analogous to that which is sometimes, though rarely, seen in human beings. Women *enceinte* have often curious tastes, as witness the lady whom nothing would please, but a bite of a baker's shoulder. She had the bite and was satisfied. We trust the baker was. Or the princess who had her husband killed; she ate part of him, and had the remainder salted for future consumption. A lady of my acquaintance, —she was a savage, and lived in Lamoo on the East Coast of Africa,—had twins, a very little baby boy and a big fat baby girl. I saw her some days after, squatting in front of her bamboo hut, and singing low to her little son.

"But, in the name of goodness," said I, "what have you got in the pot? French missionary?"

"No," she said; exhibiting no sort of surprise at my question, for a dish of French

missionary was by no means unknown in those parts. And she intimated to me, that it was *only* the baby girl, with whom she intended to feed the little baby boy, as he had not got fair play; and so the majesty of justice was maintained.

Cats are greatly sensible of the honour of maternity, and when deprived of their kittens feel very wretched indeed. Under these circumstances, they will nurse and suckle almost any creature.

Cats rearing Dogs.—A cat of mine, a few years ago, suckled and reared a beautiful Pomeranian dog. I thought at the time this was rather surprising; but I should not be surprised now at anything a cat did.

A gentleman, the other day, had a very nice fox-terrier bitch. The poor thing died giving birth to a litter of four puppies. His cat, however, whose kittens had been all drowned a day or too before, immediately installed herself in the vacant bed and adopted the puppies. She proved a good mother to them, and successfully reared every one of them.

I know of another similar instance, where a cat was house-mate with a rather valuable bitch; this bitch brought forth a litter of seven pups. The cat had five kittens at the same time. Thinking that seven whelps were rather many for the bitch to rear, four of pussy's kittens were drowned and two pups put to her instead. But pussy peremptorily refused to have anything to say to them, and persisted in that refusal until the expedient was tried of drowning the remaining kitten. That brought the cat to her senses; and she took to her foster children kindly enough and reared them. This same cat afterwards suckled a puppy and kitten at the same time.

One day she gave birth to her kittens in an out-house, and at once leaving them to shift for themselves, she entered the dwelling house and insisted on giving suck to the dog of her first adoption. As he was now a full-grown dog, and had a great regard for his own respectability, he didn't see the fun of it. Pussy went after him nevertheless, lying down in front of him, and mewing

piteously up in his face. When, to get rid of her importunities, the dog went out, she even followed him to the street, and only ceased pestering him, when her kittens were discovered and brought to her.

CAT ADOPTING HER GRAND-CHILDREN.—A lady had two cats, mother and daughter, living in the same house with her. The mother was of a quiet, domesticated turn of mind, and preferred fire-side enjoyments to out-of-door sports; but the daughter was quite the reverse. She was a mighty huntress, and it was no uncommon thing, to see her coming waddling across the fields with a rabbit as big as herself in her mouth. Both these cats had kittens at the same time, but the daughter seemed determined, that nursing should not interfere with her hunting expeditions. She was a strong-minded woman's-rights sort of a cat, and was often scouring the country in pursuit of game, when her poor little family were starving at home. One day she went off as usual, and was never afterwards seen alive: her mangled remains were found a little way down the

line, where she had been run over by a railway train.

"We were just about," says the lady, "to drown the little orphan kits, when, to our surprise, we found that old grandmamma puss had adopted her ill-fated daughter's children, and was nursing and tending them, with the same amount of care and attention she bestowed on her own.

I know an instance where two cats, resident in the same house, had had kittens on the same day. There being no chance of finding homes for so many, they were all drowned with the exception of three. Now these two mother-cats were wise in their day and generation. No one cat, they thought, could nurse and suckle ten kits, and it was equally evident that three kittens did not require the services of two cats. So they concluded that the best plan would be to put the shattered remains of the two families,—"Your one kitty, Mrs. Tom, and my two,"—together in one bed, and take turn about in nursing them. This was accordingly done, and turned out to be a very satisfactory arrange-

ment for all parties concerned; for either cat could now go abroad when she pleased, happy in the thought that nothing could go wrong at home.

NURSING A HARE.—A certain carpenter whom I knew had a cat which in due season, —as all cats will,—produced a litter of kittens which—very cruel and thoughtless was the action—were all drowned. Poor pussy mourned her offspring for many days, but she was a female philosopher—that may seem a paradox, but she was; so she communed with herself on her bed at night, thus,—

"My inhuman master has most unfeelingly slain all my pretty little babes, and has not left me one; but he cannot dry up the fountains of a mother's love, with which my heart runs o'er; besides, I'm taking the milk-fever. But behold, day is gently breaking. I'll seek the mountain, and be it what it may, I'll have something to love, something to suckle me."

That day she found, or more probably stole, a fine young hare, which she nursed and reared as tenderly as if it had been one of her own kittens.

Nursing Squirrels.—This is by no means uncommon in cats. They will rear them either along with their own kittens or by themselves; and a very pretty sight it is to see. Squirrels thus reared make most delightful little pets.

Nursing Chickens.—I know several instances of cats supplying the place of their lost kittens with a chicken. One cat, for example, had had all her offspring,—it was her first litter,—drowned; she went at once out into the court-yard, where a hen was gathering crumbs to a large brood of chickens. One of these pussy, watching her chance, sprang upon and seized by the neck, and although hotly pursued by the enraged mother, managed to reach the house in safety, and went straight to her own bed. Here she deposited the chicken, and, lying down beside it, commenced to sing, clearly intimating that she wished her little adopted one to have a drink. But unfortunately, chickie's mouth wasn't adapted for sucking, but it cowered beside her for warmth; and as there were plenty of crumbs on the kitchen

floor, it did not want. So it became a sort of household pet, and when not eating, it was always cuddling down beside its funny foster-mother. I may mention here, that next time this same cat had kittens they were all drowned again; but this time she did a wiser thing. She found out that a cat, belonging to one of the neighbours, was the happy mother of three kittens which she had been allowed to keep. Off goes puss to this neighbour's house, and having thrashed the mother to begin with, she kidnapped and carried home one of her family. Several times was the kitten taken back, and each time pussy went and stole it again; and as she never failed to give the other cat a preliminary hiding, it was at last deemed most prudent to let her retain it.

Miss G—— is an old maid, and a great lover of cats and poultry. Once she had a cat nursing a litter of kittens, and one of the chickens in the yard being rather deformed and not thriving, Miss G. brought it and flung it to the cat, thinking it would be a great treat to her. It was a treat to her,

though hardly in the way she expected, for pussy commenced licking it all over, and forthwith adopted it, and nursed it along with her kittens. She continued to do so until it grew into a large, leggy, and withal rather ungainly hen; and the most ridiculous part of the business was, that if at any time Tuckie longed for the society of her feathered fellow-creatures, pussy went after her like a shot, and seizing her by the neck lugged her back into the house, and jumped with her into Miss G.'s bed where her kittens were.

A gentleman in New Deer, also possessed a cat who reared a chicken to hen-hood. In this case the adopted chicken was nursed alone, pussy's kittens having been drowned. This fowl's neck, was actually crooked with the cat's carrying her about so much in her mouth, so she always held her head very much to one side, and was upon the whole a very ugly hen. We see, then, that chicken-rearing by cats does not give that amount of satisfaction which is desired. It might pay, though, if they could do the hatching; but cats at present cannot

be taught to sit upon eggs. There is no saying what the future may bring forth, though, for a much more gifted animal will be *the coming cat.*

I think the reader will now be prepared to hear of cats—

NURSING HEDGEHOGS.—Yes, three of those thorny little things were actually nursed, suckled, and reared lately by a cat belonging to a gentleman, who is very fond of trying experiments of this sort. When they grew up, and were in good feather, they were very tricky and funny; but pussy soon found out that they didn't stand correction well. If she lifted a paw to them, pooh! they were transformed into three round prickly balls, before the blow fell, and pussy's paw had the worst of it. Then the poor cat would look sulkily from one little ball to another, and turning about, walk off in disgust. But three pairs of bright beady eyes were keeking at her from among the thorns; and before she had reached the fender, the little pigs were all unfolded and after her at the galop. Round would wheel

the cat, and up would roll the hogs again, then pussy would seat herself in front, and keep them thus for an hour at a time, by gently tapping each ball as it attempted to unroll itself.

Suckling Rats.—Some years ago there was a cat in Scotland who, when three of her kittens were drowned, supplied their place by bringing in three young rats to make up the number. She must have known something of arithmetic too, for, when one of the little rats died, she went out and carried in another, still to have the number five. But still another died, and probably she could not find any more, for she contented herself with nursing, and tending the two remaining ones, along with her own two kittens. I never heard what eventually became of the rats. I don't think she would have eaten them. More probably they lived and grew, and went back as missionaries to their own people.

CHAPTER XIX.

[*See Note R, Addenda.*]

PUSSY'S PLAYMATES.

I HAVE already shown in former chapters, how loving and affectionate pussy is towards her master and mistress, and how thoughtful and kind a mother she is. But to her playmates also she is ever gentle and true, whether that playmate be another cat, or an animal of quite a distinct breed. I have never known a cat cement a friendship with any creature, without such friendship lasting till death. How very wrong then to accuse pussy of being treacherous! With almost any animal that happens to be domesticated about the same house, a cat will strike up a friendship, and will be ready at any time to fight for it, and protect it from harm. It is quite a common thing to see a cat amusing itself playing with rabbits, or guinea pigs, at hide-and-seek among the bushes, or on the lawn. There is often a distinct understanding be-

tween some old horse or cow about the place. I have known a cat live entirely in the stable, and invariably go to sleep on a particular horse's back; the horse in his turn used to welcome her with a fond neigh when she came home at night.

In a village in the Highlands of Scotland, where I resided, there was a crow, a very very old, bald-headed crow, used to come morning and evening, for many months, and sit on the fence opposite, until I threw him a slice of bread or a cold boiled potato. One morning I was surprised on opening the door to find the old Bird-o'-freedom, as I called him, standing on the step. Instead of flying away, he hopped past me into the room, and perching himself on the fender, looked so knowingly first at me and then at the fire, that for the life of me I could not help thinking about Poe's raven and shuddering, fully expecting the bird would presently say, "Nevermore." If he could have spoken, I am sure he would have addressed me something after this fashion :—

"Doctor, you're something of an animal fancier, and I know you're not a bad-hearted chap on the whole. Now the fact is, I'm feeling rather poorly, and the forest winds are cold of a night; besides, I'm not so young as I have been,—I'm nigh on ninety, lad,—so I intend for my few remaining days to take my pick in a homely way at your fireside. The cat won't bite, will she?"

In fact, Muffie had fully made up her mind to turn him out of doors there and then, and with that hospitable intention was now approaching him. But Bird-o'-freedom opened his mouth, and gave vent to two such caws, as nearly shook the house. I never heard any bird have such lungs. Muffie was fairly startled, and scampered off with her tail in the air; but in a few days the cat and he were as thick as thieves. In truth, Bird-o'-freedom was a thief, at least, as far as eggs went. If he spied one in the cupboard, he watched his chance, and when it came, one dig laid the egg open, and next second the contents were down his throat with one almighty gulp. I allowed him two

eggs a day, but he would not take them if I offered them to him, or before my face; I had to lay them one by one in the cupboard, and give him the pleasure of stealing them. Muffie was never better pleased than when he was eating, and she sat and sang to him while he drank the milk from her saucer. Then she would sit and sleep cheek by jowl with him for hours. A cat with whom Muffie had never had any words before, once looked into the room, Muffie drove her out with terrible suddenness, and thrashed her properly outside the door. When the candles were lit in the long winter evenings, Bird-o'-freedom, perched upon the fender, used to look up at me so slyly, and yet so solemnly with one wicked eye, that I used to doubt whether he wasn't the devil entirely, and fly to my fiddle to dispel the thoughts. The poor crow had a fit one morning, and died on his back on the hearth-rug; and when he was dead, the cat was chief mourner. She went about for days, searching for her lost favourite, and mourning all the while, for her grief was really sincere.

"Tabby," writes a lady to me, "had been poisoned. Shortly before her death, we had her brought upstairs and laid down on the rug in front of the fire,—she was very ill, and unable to lift her head. Tom came bouncing as usual into the room, and sitting down beside her, with his paw playfully patted her on the face; but getting no response, it actually then seemed as if he understood how serious the case really was, because with the same paw he gently raised her head up a little, and kindly licked her all over. It was very affecting, and was more than we expected from him; but certainly he got great credit for the good deed, and ever after had the character of being the warmest-hearted of cats,—and poor Tabby died in his arms."

Every one knows what a warm friendship will often spring up between a cat and a dog, both resident in the same house. How they will sleep in each other's arms, eat together, fight for one another; how generous the dog is towards any weaknesses she may display; and how grateful pussy is in return. They will have their little tiffs occasionally, of

course. I have seen my cat jump on the piano-stool more than once, in order to slap Master Nero in the face; upon which the dog, swearing like the British in Flanders, hauled her off, and rubbed her well on the carpet, but did not really hurt her.

The Czar and Whiskey.—Whiskey in this case does not mean something to drink. It was the name—and a very appropriate name it was—of a little Scotch terrier, who lived in a village in the far north of Scotland. In the same house with him dwelt the Czar, —this was a large bluish-black cat, who was said to have been imported from Russia—hence his name. No two animals in the world could have loved each other more devotedly, than did the Czar and little Whiskey. And Whiskey was the gamest of the game, yet he never showed his teeth to his feline friend. From the same dish they took their meals, Whiskey merely premising that he should have all the bones. They were together all day, save when Whiskey's duty to his master called him away, and at night they shared the same couch, the Czar fondly

taking Whiskey in his arms because he was the biggest. I'm not sure, indeed, whether the Czar did not waken Whiskey, when that little gentleman took the nightmare. However, they were as loving as loving could be. And, once or twice every week, this kindly couple used to go out hunting together. They did not care for game-laws, and heeded not the keepers—they were a law unto themselves. On these occasions, they used to go out together in the morning, and after spending all the long day among the hills and woods, they invariably came home before dark. This coming home before nightfall, was doubtless a suggestion of Whiskey's, for a dog can neither see so well in the dark as a cat, nor can his constitution so well withstand the dews of night. But the very fact of the Czar's keeping early hours to please Whiskey, is another proof of how he loved him. And almost every night, these sons of Nimrod brought home with them some trophy from the hunting-ground. Sometimes it was a rabbit, more often a bird —if the latter, Whiskey generally had the

honour of carrying it, and very proud he was of the distinction; if a rabbit, the Czar bore the burden. And so things went on, till one mournful night, poor Whiskey came home later than usual, and all alone. He came in, but lay down on the door-mat, out of which he would not budge an inch. He refused his porridge and all consolation, and lay there in a listening attitude, starting up every minute at the slightest sound. His mistress went to bed and left him. It must have been long past midnight, when Whiskey came dashing into his mistress's bedroom, knocking over a chair in his hurry, and barking wildly as he dashed hither and thither, like a mad thing. When his mistress got up at last, poor little Whiskey preceded her to the door, barking and looking very anxious and excited. A pitiful mew was heard, and on the lady opening the door, in rushed Czar the cat on three legs—he had left the other in a trap. Nothing could exceed the kindness of Whiskey to his wounded playmate. He threw himself down beside her on the rug whining and crying with grief, and gently

licked her bleeding stump. And every day for weeks did Whiskey apply hot fomentations, with his soft wee tongue to pussy's leg, till it was entirely healed. But they had no more romping together in the fields and woods, for the Czar's hunting-days were over—in this world at least.

CHAPTER XX.

[*See Note S, Addenda.*]

PUSSY AND THE HARE.

In the parish of P——, Aberdeenshire, there lived some years ago a crofter and his wife, and a little boy their only son. A fine she-tabby cat who nightly sang duets with the kettle to welcome the master home, was the only other member of the family.

One day, while roaming over the moorland in search of birds' nests, the boy found a young hare, sound asleep among the heather. Such a prize was worth any number of birds' eggs, and the lad carried it tenderly home and presented it to his mother, and it was that night placed in a box in the cow-byre. Next morning it was gone—puss had eaten it no doubt, and no one could blame her. Pussy had had kittens, only a day or two before, and they had all been drowned. For about a week after the disappearance of the hare, it was observed, that pussy was not so regular in her attendance on the house as usual.

She never lay by the fire—the kettle might sing its duets by itself; she ate her meals hurriedly and greedily, and then escaped out.

"It's the hare she ate that's no agreeing wi' her," said the goodman. "There's mair in it than that," said the canny goodwife; and, with a woman's instinct, she followed pussy out and up into the hay-loft; and, lo and behold! there lay the cat, in a snug little bed, suckling the lost hare, and singing as sweetly as a linnet. Pussy reared the hare, and they became inseparables. At breakfast pussy always waited until the hare had finished, and when there happened to be broth for dinner—a dish the hare did not relish—the cat never failed to beg for a piece of bread, which she carried at once to her strange foster-child. The cat and hare went everywhere together; sometimes indeed they might be seen fully a mile from home. This cat was a famous hunter, and always brought her dead rabbits home. It was funny, at times, to see the pair coming from the fields at even, the cat with her dead quarry in her mouth, creeping stealthily along, her eyes in

every direction, and the big hare, rather out of breath, bringing up the rear, and looking very foolish, as if he didn't exactly know what it all meant, and rather deprecated the cat's conduct than otherwise. This cat could fish; for one day a gentleman hooked a large salmon in the river, and after running it for nearly two hours his line broke and he lost it. Now, this salmon was found next morning on the cottar's door-step. The cat and hare were both present; and as there is no account on record of hares fishing, we think the credit of the capture must be given to pussy. For two years this strangely matched couple were friends, and bosom companions, for they slept together. But, one fine summer's day they were lying in front of the house half-asleep in the sunshine,—the hare at one side of the door, pussy at the other, and the cottar's wife knitting between them.

The whole scene was one "of peas," and might have remained so, only tragedy, in the shape of farmer Dick's big, disreputable collie, was at that precise moment peeping round a corner and taking stock.

"Hullo!" said the dog to himself; "it's a —no, it isn't; yes, it is; hang me, if it isn't —*a hare*—as cheeky as you like too. Ill teach him."

And he did. The poor hare never required another lesson. Nor did pussy lose any time in giving the dog one. Rendered frantic by her poor friend's death, she sprang on his back and tore him with tooth and nail. One of the dog's eyes was entirely destroyed; and it need not be added he ever after gave that house a wide berth. After the untimely fate of her foster-child, pussy was extremely disconsolate, moping about and never caring to leave the house. She had not long to mourn for him however, for some months after she fell a victim to her own curiosity; for, like women, cats are extremely prying.

The cottar's wife was one day melting some tallow in a large tea-pot, which after using she left by the fire-side; and that night, when every one was in bed, pussy, who had been dying all day to know what was inside that tea-pot, "pirled" off the lid and popped her imprudent head in. Alas! she never

got it out again. About midnight the honest couple—snug in bed—were awakened by a dreadful clattering noise in the kitchen, along the passage, and on the stair.

"Geordie, Geordie! rise and see," said the good wife, nudging her goodman.

"Jean, Jean! rise and see yersel'," said he, nudging her in turn.

"It's *Hallow E'en*, Geordie," cried Jean; "and there is a deil, or *deils* rather, in the house, I ken." For the reader must bear in mind that, though banished from English soil, fairies, bogles, and all that ilk, still linger among the breckans of our Scottish glades and glens; and annually on the night of 31st October, they play a thousand pranks under the direct supervision of the archfiend himself. This superstition proved fatal to poor puss. Gradually the noise got less, and soon ceased entirely. Next morning, the cottar's wife was up betimes and downstairs. She soon returned, wringing her hands and weeping bitterly.

"Oh! Geordie," she cried; "come doon and see what the deil has done to our poor pussy."

CHAPTER XXI.

[*See Note T, Addenda.*]

THE MILLER'S FRIEND—A TALE.

You might have travelled many a long summer's day and not met with such another. The very look of him was enough to dispel all ideas of hunger: he was so big and so stout, yet withal so rosy and hardy. His voice had a cheery ring with it, which, combined with the merry twinkle in his eye, set you on good terms with yourself at once, if indeed it did not make you laugh outright. As for *his* laugh, to hear it once was to remember it for ever. It was hearty, it was musical; in pitch something between the *Ha! ha! ha!* and the Ho! ho! ho! and it rang through the old mill, wakening a dozen sleeping echoes, and causing the old bulldog to bark, although that quadruped had to lean against a pillar to perform the feat. The miller wasn't a young man by any means; but though

he had no wife, he was the jolliest widower ever you saw, albeit his hair and whiskers were like the powdery snow. But his voice —ay, that was the bit—you should have heard it rising in song-snatches, and rolling high over the double bass of the grinding wheels and the shrill clack-clack of that merry old mill.

He was honest moreover. No one in the parish had ever been heard to accuse him of giving light weight, or adding sand to the meal to make it turn the scale sooner. And, as a matter of course, he was a general favourite, especially among the farmer's daughters and servant-maids; so much so indeed, that all round the country it became the general custom to take meal by the stone, instead of by the bushel, that the "errands to the mill" might be all the more frequent. And indeed, however dull a lass might be, when she was going to the mill, she never left it without a rosier blush on her bonnie cheek, and a smile playing around her lips, as she trundled cheerily along with her bag upon her

head. Yes, indeed, had he wanted a wife, the miller might have married the youngest of them all. Such was the miller, and such too were the race he sprang from,—they were in the habit of getting young again, just at the age that other folks began to get old. They were in their prime at eighty, and never thought of departing this life, until the dial shadow of their existence began to creep near the hundred. Then all at once it used to strike Old Death, that he had forgotten all about them, so he would lift his scythe, and cut them down smartly and suddenly.

And as the miller was jolly, so everything about that old mill was jolly too. There was music in the mill-lead as the waters leapt joyously from under the sluice, and hurried along to their task, and the great wheel itself, as it turned slowly and steadily round, seemed actually bursting with suppressed merriment. Then you should have seen the sweet little bit of scenery the mill was set down in. Ah! English tourists have yet to learn, that

there is one part of Scotland yet unhackneyed, yet uncockneyed, yet unspoiled, but still romantic enough to repay a journey from London-town. The mill was built by the banks of the wimpling Don,—built in a dingle, green rolling braes sloping up at one side, steep rocks on the other, and the river, here broad and fordable, rippling between. On the top of the rocks waved a tall pine forest; some of the trees hung by their roots over the cliff just as the storm had left them. 'T was sweet in summertime to hear the birds singing in that forest, or to see the crimson glow of sunset glimmering through the branches; but how tall and dark and weirdly looked those trees, as they stretched their branches up into the green frosty sky of a quiet winter's gloaming.

To my friend the miller this wood had an especial attraction, for within its shade he had wooed his first, his early love. If you had scaled the little foot-path, that struggled up through the rocks, at the place where they were less precipitous, and

finally gained the cliff, just at the point where Snuffie Sandy tumbled over in the dark and broke his neck, you would have come to a little foot-path, that went windingly away among the tall solemn Scotch pines, to the roots of which the sun never penetrated even at noon, and whose massive trunks might have been mistaken in the sombre light, for the pillars in some gigantic cavern. Onward for a quarter of an hour, and you would suddenly have found yourself in a clearing in the midst of the forest. This clearing was fully a square mile in extent, and was tastefully laid out as a little farm, neat cottage and garden, barnyard, field, and fence, and all complete, as snug a little place as you could wish to see. Owing to its situation, there was quite an understanding between the domestic animals, and the denizens of the surrounding wood. In summertime the hare and the rabbit, browsed peacefully beside the cows and the sheep; the birds came regularly to the latter for a supply of wool to line their nests;

the hens and ducks shared their oats amicably with the wild pigeons; and old Dobbin the horse, who used to be tethered among the clover, didn't mind the crows a bit: they used his back as a sort of moving hustings on which to debate politics or have an occasional stand-up fight, and when Dobbin lay down to rest they lovingly picked his teeth. And everything immediately around the cottage, was as natty and neat as the little farm itself. The greenest of garden gates led you into the sprucest of little gardens; the box was neatly trimmed; never a blade of grass grew on the gravel; and although there were not many flowers, it did one's heart good in early spring to see the blue and yellow crocuses, peeping through the dun earth, and the sweet-scented primrose discs, diamonded with dew, reclining on the delicate green of their tender leaves. There was a rustic porch around the cottage door; it was formed of the unbarked stems of the spruce fir-tree, with just an inch of branch left on for effect, and the door

itself boasted of a brass knocker, bright enough to shave at; and had you knocked and been invited "ben" to the best-parlour, you would have found everything there too both trig and trim. There was nothing either on the mantle-piece or on the walls to offend your feelings. There were no hideous ornaments or foxy lithographs, but shells, and grass, and moss, and a few modest engravings and photo's of friends. Instead of a chiffonier there was a neat chest of drawers, and instead of a piano a spinning-wheel. At this latter, Nannie, when not milking or attending to household matters, sat birring all day long, making music which, if not operatic, was at least natural, and suited Nannie and pleased the cat to a nicety. Nannie of course was the presiding goddess of the cottage and farm. The place was all her own. She kept a man and a laddie to do the out-work, and a tidy bit of a girl to assist her in-doors. Nannie from all accounts must have been alarmingly near forty, though she looked a full dozen of years younger, and beautiful

for even that age,—beautiful in regularity of features, in just sufficient colour, and in a lack of all coarseness. Taking her, figure and all combined, you would have said that, if not a lady, she was at least born to adorn a higher sphere. She had never been married, but didn't look an old maid by any means. For Nannie had had her little history. And merry and cheerful as she always was during the day, still, when the day's duties were over, and she had retired to her little chamber, after she had read her chapter and psalm and sat down to muse, there would come a strange sad look in her eyes, and at times a tear stood there, as she took from her pocket a portrait and a lock of dark brown hair. And that portrait on which she gazed so fondly, although the face was younger, was the miller's; his, too, though different in colour, that lock of hair tied with blue, that seemed to cling caressingly around poor Nannie's finger. For the miller and she had loved each other all their lives long. Oh! their story is quite

a common one,—a lover's quarrel, a harsh word, and a silent parting: that was all. And the miller had gone off in a pet, and married a woman double his age. The marriage was as uncongenial as snow in summer; but now, though his wife had been long in her grave, the miller, though he knew he could get forgiveness at once from Nannie, never went to ask it, feeling he had erred too deeply to deserve it. So they had lived for years—those two loving hearts—with only the dark pine forest and the broad river between them.

One dark Christmas morning the miller was astir long before his usual time, for there was more to do than he could well manage. There was barley to prepare for Christmas broth, and meal for Christmas brose; so long before the sun had dreamt of getting out of bed, he had hauled up the sluice. The waters rushed headlong on towards the great mill-wheel; the great mill-wheel turned slowly round; and suddenly the old mill, previously as silent and dark as the grave itself, became instinct with life and sound.

It was a good quarter of a mile walk, from the mill-dam sluice to the mill. Hundreds of times he had gone the road before, but on this particular morning, somehow or other, the miller felt peculiarly nervous. It was so dark, and everything was so still, and being Christmas morning, what more likely than that he should see a ghost. He tried to sing, but for once in his life he failed; and he felt quite a sense of relief when the farmer's cocks awoke, and began hallooing to each other all over the country. So, in no enviable frame of mind, he reached the mill and opened the door. The old dog came to meet him, and he struck a light, and shaking off for a time his superstitious fears, he donned a dusty coat, and set to work in earnest. First there was the corn to spread upon the kiln. That done, he went below to put a match to the kiln-fire which was already laid. In this furnace it was not coals that were burned, nor wood either, but the outside husks of the oats themselves,—what are called in Scotland "shealings." This made a roaring fire, and was easily lit. All was darkness when the

miller went down, but he soon had both light and heat. Indeed, from the latter he was fain to stand back; and so, leaning on his shovel, as he contemplated his work, with the firelight playing around his handsome face and figure and the darkness behind him, he would have formed no mean study for a painter. But suddenly the spade dropped from his grasp, his face turned pale,—pale as it never would be again until death set his seal on it,—and the perspiration stood in big drops on his brow, while his frightened gaze was riveted on the furnace before him. He had seen *a face in the fire*, apparently that of a demon—what else could it be?—black and unearthly looking, with white teeth and green glaring eyes; it showed but a moment, and disappeared again in the smoke beneath the kiln. For a few seconds which seemed like ages, he stood there transfixed; then again that awful face in the blaze, and this time a horrid yell which seemed to rend the very mill; and something sprang wildly from the furnace,—sprung at him, over him, through him, somehow or anyhow, the miller could not

tell,—he had tumbled down in a dead faint. Daylight was just coming in when he awoke. The fire was black out, and the mill still grinding away at nothing in particular. Outside, the snow lay on the ground to a depth of several inches; it was no wonder then that the poor miller began to shiver, as soon as he gathered himself up. He shivered,—and when he thought of that terrible apparition, he shuddered as well as shivered.

"An awfu' visitation," he muttered to himself,—"a truly awfu' visitation on a Christmas morning;" and he began to wonder what he had ever done to deserve it. He went over his whole life,—honest man, it had been anything but a chequered or eventful one,—and finally came to the conclusion that it must be a judgment on him for forsaking his early love.

"Poor lonely Nannie!" he sighed, as he dragged himself wearily away to begin his work.

The miller was a steady, sober man, but he did feel glad when visitors began to arrive at the mill, and being Christmas morning, bring

a bottle with them. But he could not find exhilaration in the whisky,—no, nor consolation either. He simply could not get warm, only his face seemed to glow; and there was a weight at his heart, as if he had swallowed one of his own millstones. When at last the day wore over, and he found himself at home, he thought he had never felt so tired in his life before. His decent old body of a housekeeper marked how ill he looked, and insisted on putting him to bed at once, with a bottle of hot water, an extra blanket, and a basin of gruel.

Next day the miller was in a raging fever, and for many weeks he seemed only hovering between life and death. Mrs. Fowler, as his housekeeper was called, could not have been more kind to him if he had been her own son. But one day she said to herself, as she looked upon his poor worn face, "I see I canna cure him, and the man will die if assistance doesna come soon. I'll try it,—I'll try it."

What the trying it had reference to we shall soon see. Mrs. Fowler put on her

Sunday's gown and bonnet, put on her scarlet shawl and her sable boa, and telling the miller she would soon return, went out into the keen January air, and took her way to the bridge that spanned the rapid Don. For the good lady was far too old to try the ford, or climb the rocks, or trust herself in the dark little footpath, that led through the forest to Nannie's house. She arrived there in good time for all that.

Nannie was spinning, but strange to say, she was always glad to see Mrs. Fowler. So she put aside the reel and bustled about to get tea ready.

"And is he getting any better?" asked Nannie at length, referring to the miller. The question was asked in seemingly a half-careless tone, but none knew but herself, how her heart was beating all the while.

"Na, na, poor man," said Janet, for that was her maiden name, "he is no long for this world."

Nannie had turned away her head, and buried her face in her hands. Presently she was sobbing like a child. Janet spoke not.

"Oh," cried poor Nannie, "I must, I *shall* see him before he dies."

Then Janet spoke.

"And God in heaven bless you, my bonnie bairn, for those words; for you're the only one in this weary world that can save his life."

"No,—but," said Nannie, "if he really is going to live, you know,—I—a—"

Oh the inconsistency of women! A moment before, and she would have given all she possessed in the world for one glance of the loved face; now, because he was going to live,—oh, dear!

But Janet hastened to tell her all the story,—how in his wild delirium he had spoke of no one, raved of no one, save her; and now that the fever had subsided and left him weak as a baby, how he always led the subject on to Nannie, his early love, their rambles in the pine-forest, and his cruel desertion of her, and how he always wound up with the melancholy reflection, that he knew poor Nannie would forgive him when she saw him being carried to his "lang hame."

And so well did Janet represent the whole matter and argue her case, that Nannie gave her consent to go along with her even then. And she laughed and cried at the same time, in quite a hysterical way, as she said,—

"Well, Mistress Fowler,—he! he! he!—you know best and—he! he!—if you really think it will do the poor man good, I'll go; and—but—oh! Mistress Fowler, I *must* have a cry."

And she did.

And it really seemed to do her good; for she smiled quite calm and happy-like afterwards—the heightened flush in her cheeks making her look ten times prettier; and she was soon dressed and ready to march.

Just as she was going out, however, her countenance fell, and,—

"Oh! Mistress Fowler, my poor cat," cried Nannie.

"Your cat?" said Janet.

"Aye, woman, my cat," replied Nannie; "come and see the poor darling. Somehow or other it got dreadfully burnt, about three weeks ago, and it isn't better yet; come and see."

"That a cat!" said Janet with uplifted hands and eyes; "dearie me! dearie me!"

In good sooth it might have been taken for a kangaroo, or anything else you liked. There wasn't a hair on its whole body; and although the wounds and scars were healed, it was still in a state of prostration and debility. It purred kindly, however, when its mistress gently stroked it, showing how fully it appreciated her kindness. * * *

"You'll even take the poor thing wi' you, Nannie," said old Janet.

"Three whole hours," said the miller to himself as he lay in bed and looked up at the old-fashioned eight-day clock, whose melancholy ticking had been his only solace since Janet left,—"three whole hours, and she promised she would be back in one." Presently big flakes of snow began to fall slowly ground-wards, and the poor man's spirits seemed to fall along with them. It was so gloomy being all alone in the still house; the very fire had forsaken him; and he shivered as he gazed out into the fast closing winter's day. He remembered how different had been

his feelings one evening, long, long ago, when he had stood with her by his side, looking upwards through the maze of snow-flakes, —how they had crept closer together from the cold, and sworn to be for ever near each other. Ah, that lost love! He was sure he was dying, even now; and how dreadful he thought it was to die all alone. He wondered if *she* would feel sorry, when she heard of his death. And then he slept—a nasty fitful starting sleep, with painful racking dreams; now he was climbing interminable precipices, every moment ready to fall; now he was walking over long trackless moors that would never, never have an end; and now he was toiling at the mill with wheels, wheels all around him, and horrid shapes with brown skinny arms, that tried to clutch and pull him down among the dark grinding machinery; then he screamed, or tried to scream, and at once his dream took another form. He seemed to be lying in his own room, and could hear the ticking of the old clock; but it was no longer dark and dismal, the blinds were drawn, the lamp was lit, a

cheerful fire burned on the clean-swept hearth, and the kettle sang on the hob, and—ah, blissful vision! there, beside the bed, sat Nannie,—his Nannie, as he had seen her years and years ago; a bright blush was on her cheek, and her bonnie eyes were bent on his face with so sad a look. The miller held his breath, lest the vision should vanish into darkness.

"Oh! oh!" cried poor Nannie, "he doesn't know me, he doesn't know me;" and she hid her face on his breast and sobbed aloud. *Now* he knew it was no dream. He stretched out his arms, but it had all come so suddenly, everything seemed to swim before his eyes, and his head sank like lead on the pillow. He had fainted.

When he opened his eyes again, it was only to meet once more Nannie's loving anxious gaze; he could only smile as he pressed her hand, and fell into a sleep, sweeter than he had slept since childhood.

Well may the poet call sleep "Nature's sweet restorer." But there is something more important than even sleep itself, and

without which, refreshing sleep can never come—happiness and contentment. Psychics, or mental treatment, is not now overlooked by medical men as it used to be; and if ever the philosopher's stone, or the secret of making men immortal, be found, it will be through this science.

It was far into the middle of next day, before the miller awoke. He felt a sensation of happiness at his heart even before he opened his eyes, or remembered the cause. The cause indeed was just then busy getting ready his breakfast. It was a clear frosty day outside, with the sky ever so bright and blue, and the whole landscape white with dry powdery snow; and inside everything was as neat as new pins. How pretty and home-like Nannie looked, bustling about with her peachy cheeks and her nut-brown hair. It was quite refreshing to look at her,—at least so the miller thought; and he gave a big double-shuffle sigh, like what a child does when it is just finishing a good cry.

"Oh! you're awake, are you?" said Nannie, going to the bedside, and taking his hot hand between her cold little palms.

"I've been keeking at you from under the coverlit for mair than an hour," said the miller, honestly.

"And what made ye come, Nannie?"

"I heard you were dying, John."

"Oh! bless you, bless you, poor lassie; it is mair than kind,—it's what only an angel would do. But if ye knew what I've suffered a' these lang lang years,—"

"I do know, John; Janet has told me everything."

"And bye-gones are bye-gones; and I'm forgiven?"

"Bye-gones are bye-gones, John; and you're forgiven."

"Nannie," said the miller, emphatically, "that wee deevilock (imp) that lap oot at me through the kiln-fire was a saint, I'll be sworn."

"It's here," said Nannie.

"Eh?" said John, somewhat nervously.

"Here," continued Nannie; and she held up the cat which had been sleeping cosily at the miller's feet all the night.

"Dear me! dear me!" said the invalid.

Well, well; and the deevilock was a cat—your cat—after all. Well, Nannie, it's no bonnie; but, Lord bless it, give me it, till I take it into my bosom."

Pussy, purring, was duly deposited under the bed-clothes; and then Nannie enjoined her patient not to talk any more. "But," she added, "you do feel better; don't you?"

"Better! Nannie," quo' John; "if I had any mortal thing on besides my sark, I would rise this vera minute, and dance the reel o' Bogie."

It was a treat to John to see Nannie infusing the tea in Janet's best brown-stone, —it was a treat to see her kneeling there, making the toast and then putting on the butter, and crushing the hard edges with the knife, and seaming it across and across, that the butter might find its way to the interior; and it was a treat to see the way she placed the little table at his pillow-side, and spread a clean white towel over the tray, that held the plates for the toast, and the pot with the fragrant tea. But when she placed her own cup on the same tray, and sat

down beside him, John was indeed a happy man; and scarcely a mouthful could he swallow for looking at her, although she had cut the tender juicy steak into the most tempting tiny morsels that ever were seen.

Now although the miller began to revive, from the very day that Nannie first became his gentle nurse, still he had a hard tussle for his life; and the winter's snow had melted, the ploughed fields—dotted here and there with sacks of golden grain—were changing from black to brown in the spring sunshine, ere, leaning on Nannie's arm, he could take even a short walk. It was wonderful, though, the amount of good even that first little outing did him. It seemed to put new life into his veins, to see the buds coming out on the trees, the grass turning green, and the sturdy farmers busy scattering the corn, with the reverend-looking rooks in swallow-tail coats, religiously following at their heels. Oh! bless you, it was the worms, not the grain, they were gobbling up. To the upper moorland the peewits had returned, and the curlew was mingling his shrill scream with

their laughing voices; and of course there was the lark up yonder in heaven's blue, all a-quiver with song, and ever and anon cocking his head, and giving another look down, to see if that hussy of a hen of his—who couldn't sing a stave to save her life—was duly appreciating his efforts to amuse her. Well, then, if I tell you that the soft spring-wind was blowing balmily from the south-west, —as properly educated spring-winds always ought to, and do blow,—you will not marvel that, when the miller at last sought the house, there was a brighter look in his eye, and that the roses of returning health had already begun to bud on his cheeks. Old Janet met him in the door, and noted this.

"Ay, my lad," she said, with a cheery nod, "you'll live yet awhile."

That same evening Janet beckoned Nannie into her own room, and having closed the door,—

"Now," she said, "my dear lassie, I'm just going to tell you, you've done your duty like a Christian. Wi' the blessing of God ye hae saved John's life."

"You think he is really out of danger, then?" asked Nannie, anxiously.

"He'll be in danger lang eno', if you bide ony mair wi' him," answered Janet, with Scottish bluntness.

"Ye'll even gang home the morn, my lass, and I'll make John himsel' come over and thank you for a' you've done for him, as soon as he can walk as far; and mark my words, he won't let that be lang."

So next morning Nannie took her departure, back to her little farm in the pine forest. But pussy had no such intention. She had quite recovered the effects of her late incineration, and had got a complete new coat of the silkiest fur. Besides, she had taken quite a fancy to the miller,—for here again cats are like women: allow them to nurse and attend you when ill, and they are sure to love you. There were water-rats to catch in the dam, mice in the mill, and plenty of trout in the mill-lead, and this cat was madly fond of sport,—so she stayed.

Nannie was right about the miller's recovery. Every day he extended his walk a

little farther, and by-and-by was quite able to superintend matters at the mill.

Well, one fine morning, when the country-side was busy laying down the turnips, John, dressed in his best, with a smart cane in his hand,—for the day was to be big with his fate,—took the road and shaped his course for Nannie's farm. Mind you, all the time that Nannie was nursing him, John never breathed a word of his love for her or his hopes for the future,—he was much too honourable to take so unfair an advantage.

Nannie was busy in her little garden; and either the pleasure of meeting the miller, or the excitement of labour had flushed her cheeks, and made her look very pretty indeed.

"I just came over to help you with the garden a bit," said John,—the hypocrite! "for thanks to you, Nannie, I'm just as strong as a young colt."

So they worked in the garden most industriously all day, just like a second edition of Adam and Eve; and at sunset Nannie set out to convoy the miller through the pine wood. Now, although they had both been

chattering all day like a couple of magpies, neither now had a word to say. Nevertheless they took the path as if by instinct, that led down into the hazel-copse that overlooked the wimpling Don. There were yellow primroses growing here, and wild sorrel, and a mossy bank; and on this our lovers sat.

"Ah!" said John, "it does seem strange, but this is the very spot where we parted years ago,—and in anger, dear lassie."

Nannie was silent.

"You'll marry me now; won't you?" continued John.

A soft warm hand placed in his, was the reply; a wee mouth held up to kiss, and a face all wet with tears. What little fools women are, to be sure!

In the first harvest-moon the miller and she were married. There was a wedding-breakfast, a wedding-dinner, ay, and a wedding-ball. To this latter came all the flower of the country; it was held in the old mill, and began as early as six in the evening. Never before in the country-side had such a rant been seen or heard tell of. There

were three small fiddles and a blind bass, besides a clarionet and a squinting fifer;—what do you think of that for music? And there were four-and-twenty "sweetie wives" * round the door, with baskets full to the brim; and they were all *sold out before morning*,—think of that. Now the English reader has little notion how important a personage a "sweetie-wife" is at a country ball. The "sweeties" are made up in little ornamented sixpenny bags, and to these a young man treats his partner after a dance; so you may tell how any girl is appreciated by the number of bags of sweeties in her possession. Highest of all is the belle of the ball herself,—a lovely and stately girl, who will only dance with men with beards, and who has so many bags that her pockets will hold no more; so she keeps dealing them out with a queenly hand, to her plainer and less fair friends. Then there are stars of lesser magnitude, with enough but none to spare; and minor constellations, with perhaps a dozen bags; and there are ten-bag beauties, and seven-bag

* Women selling Scotch confectionery.

beauties, and five-bag beauties, three-bag beauties, and beauties with never a bag at all, who have only been thought worthy of getting their sweeties in loose handfuls.

Ay, that was a ball. The miller had given orders that the lads and lasses should "dance the day-light in," and that not even a "sweetie-wife" should go home sober. Then, hey! how the fiddlers played! Hey! how the dancers danced! and hey! how the sweeties flew!

And when, during a lull, the miller himself and his pretty wife came in to dance one reel, just for fashion sake,—oh, dear! wasn't the floor quickly filled? The fiddlers played as they hadn't played yet; and the way the old blind bass screwed his mouth, and turned up the whites of his eyes was a caution to see. The tune was that rattling old Scotch strathspey, "The Miller of Drone"; and you should just have heard the cracking of thumbs and the hooch-!-ing,—if you had had a single drop of Scottish blood, twelve generations removed, you would have been on your pins at once. But when they came to the reel, the

hoochs! were fired off like pistol shots, till they ended in one jubilant hurrah!! and the rafters rang as the music stopped. Then steaming whiskey punch was handed round in bumpers from buckets, and all drank the miller's health, and the miller's wife's health, and long life and happiness, and three times three, with Highland honours. Then the miller and his bride drove off,—in a real carriage and pair, mind you; with wedding-favours on the horses' heads, and tassels at their ears, oh! none of your half-and-half affairs; and eight-and-forty old shoes from four-and-twenty old sweetie wives, came whistling after them, as they rattled round the corner and were lost to view.

I am in a position to state, that John and his Nannie spent a most happy honeymoon in the Highlands of their native land, in that most pleasant of all seasons when the bloom still lingers on the heather and the autumn tints are on the trees.

Years have fled since then, but the old mill-wheel goes merrily round as in the days of yore; and Nannie and John are still alive, and

likely to live for many a long year. And when the miller returns from his labour of an evening to his home in the pine-wood, there are a clean fireside and a singing kettle to welcome him; and better still, a little curly-haired boy with his mother's eyes, and a wee baby-girl with its father's dimples and its mother's smile. Pussy is getting old, but in the long fore-nights of winter she loves to play with the little ones on the rug, or lull them to sleep with her drowsy purr; but, when "summer days are fine," she will follow them far a-field, and the children gather gowans on the leas and string them into garlands to hang around her neck; and at sundown, pussy, they think, must be very tired; the good-natured cat humours the bairnies' fancy, and pretends to be nothing short of dead-beat, and so they carry pussy home.

ADDENDA.

Note A.

I deem it fair both to myself and to the reader, to supplement my own evidence on the "Curiosities of Cat Life," by giving the names and addresses of my authorities for those of my anecdotes, which may seem to run contrary to the generally received opinions, concerning cats; at the same time thanking those ladies and gentlemen, who have taken so much interest in the progress of this work, and expressed themselves willing to vouch for the truth of the incidents herein related by me. I have tried to make the anecdotes as readable as possible, and as humorous, as I know many people think "cats" a dry subject; *but in no single instance have the interests of truth been disregarded.* My anecdotes are what might be called sample anecdotes, as I have many hundreds more of the same sort, my object being to describe *pussy as she really is,* and thus, to gain favour for an animal hitherto understood only by the few, and abused by the many. And, nothing would give me greater pain, than the reader to have an idea, that my cats are exceptional cats; for, I distinctly aver, that *no cat mentioned in this book, has either done or suffered anything, which any other cat in the kingdom cannot do or suffer.*

INDEX OF NAMES AND ADDRESSES.

Anderson, Alex., Mr., New Fowlis, Crieff, N.B.
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Whyte, J., Mr., Dallfied Terrace, Dundee.
Wilson, G., Mrs., Cults, near Aberdeen.

NOTE B.

Anecdotes of "Jenny," and "the cat, kitten, and mice,"—from Mrs. McDonald. The cat with two homes,—Mr. J. McLean. The cat that eats its mother's kittens, lives at an hotel adjoining the railway station, Keighley, Yorkshire. The cat ringing the bell,—Miss McCorkle.

NOTE C.

The cat that went to the harvest-field with mistress and child,—Mrs. — Kintore, Aberdeen. Anecdotes of tabby and child,—Miss Durno. Cat saving the life of the sick child,—Mrs. G. Wilson.

NOTE D.

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Note E.

Anecdote of woman going to harvest,—Mr. Samuel Gerrard. Sagacity of the shopkeeper's cat,—Mrs. Gordon. Cat and starling's nest,—Mrs. Wilson. Cat baiting mouse's hole,—Mr. Rebecca. Cat taking a Fenian's revenge,—Mr. Robinson. Cats mysteriously disappearing: first anecdote,—Mr. D. Miller; second ditto,—Mrs. Gordon.

Note F.

"The cat that kept the Sabbath,"—from incidents related by Mr. Whyte. Mrs. Gordon and Mr. Swanson also know of almost similar instances.

Note G.

Cat and the tame mavis,—Mr. P. Gray. The merchant's honest cat,—Mr. Taylor. Cat bringing home a live canary,—Mr. Watson.

Note H.

"Ploughman's Mysie,"—from incidents related by Mr. Watson, etc.

Note I.

Cat and pigeon loft,—this occurred in Dundee. Cat and school-boy,—Mr. A. Grant. Buried cats,—Mrs. G. Wilson. Tom the cat, and Archie,—Mr. Taylor.

Note J.

Cat travelling to Wales after her master,—Mr. Whiteley. Mr. Davis possesses a cat that travelled from Pembroke to Aberdare, over fifty miles.

Note K.

. Cat and pickled herring,—Mrs. Gordon. Cat and "bonnie fishwife,"—Mr. D. Miller. The cat that *was* a thief,—from incidents related by Mr. Smith.

Note L.

Mary, the old maid, and her cat,—Mr. Taylor. Cats saving kittens' lives by swimming,—Miss Durno and Mr. Mitchell. "Ginger and Josie," these two cats are, I believe, still alive. They belong to Miss Anderson.

Note M.

Miller's cat,—Mr. Philip. Cat that kept watch with its master at sea,—Mrs. Church. Cat's love for the boy that caused its death,—Miss Lynch. Fiddler's cat, that died on his grave,—Mr. Crerar.

Note N.

The anecdotes of cats fishing, both in shallow water and in deep, can be testified to by Mrs. Gordon, Mr. P. Sibbald, Mr. Philip, and Mr. Paterson, etc.; Cats teaching their kittens to fish, by Mrs.

Gordon and Mr. Taylor. Cat catching eels,—Mr. T. Gray. Water-rats,—Mr. T. Gray.

Note O.

The sketch of the starling in this tale is taken from life.

Note P.

Anecdote of Pirnie,—Mr. Watson. Graysie and the weasel,—Miss Durno. Cat killing twenty rats in a day,—Mr. Gerrard. Anecdote of poor farmer and the rabbits,—Mr. Gerrard. Cat and the fox,—Mr. A. Grant.

Note Q.

The further adventures of this famous cat, Gibbey, will be found in the second volume, in the tale entitled "The Two Muffies."

Note R.

Cats rearing dogs—this is a very common occurrence,—Mr. Stoddart and Mr. Watson. Cat rearing a hare—this is likewise not unusual. The late Mr. J. Duncan, Wolfhill Village, Perthshire, had a cat that was in the constant habit of killing and bringing home rabbits as large as herself. Still, when once upon a time all her kittens were drowned, she went and brought home two young rabbits, which she suckled and reared to maturity, and defended from dogs and cats and all comers.

"It was especially observed," says Mr. Ford, "that she never brought them mice and birds, as she always used to do with her kittens."

Nursing squirrels. Every one has seen this, doubtless.

Nursing chickens. I confess I was surprised when I first heard of this habit in some cats, as related to me by Miss Gillespie; but since then the matter has been placed beyond a doubt by dozens of witnesses.

Nursing hedgehogs,—Mr. Paterson.

Nursing rats,—Miss C. A. Morseley.

Note S.

Anecdote of Tom and Tabby,—Mrs. McDonald. Anecdote of the Czar and Whiskey,—Mr. Taylor. Pussy and the hare,—a true account of the latter years of a very remarkable cat and her no less remarkable bosom companion. I could conduct the reader now to a certain family, where a cat, a dog, and a rabbit nightly sleep together on the hearth-rug.

"Pussy and the hare,"—from incidents related by Mr. Tyndal.

Note T.

"The Miller's Friend." This is a tale based on fact. The cat mentioned in the story was *twice* nearly burned alive in the kiln. It was strange, that

although she took up her abode for a time at the mill, she went home to have her kittens. When the different members of her family could provide for themselves, she went back. She was very expert at fishing and catching water-rats. For the incidents of the story I am indebted to Mr. Philip.

The following anecdote was kindly sent me by Mr. Catto, of *The People's Journal*:—

Curious Story of a Montrose Cat.—About five o'clock on Friday morning the loud "walin" of a cat was heard at a door in Castle Street, Montrose. "Mither," exclaimed Johnny to his parent, "that's Tammie at the door." "Na, na," said his mother, "it canna' be him, for I threw him ower the brig and drooned him a fortnight since." Nevertheless, the "wals" became more loud and frequent. The good woman became terrified, and cried out, "Oh, dinna' let him in, Johnny; it's his ghost!" Notwithstanding the terrific appearance of the cat, which all who have seen agree in acknowledging as something indescribably horrible, Johnny rose, cautiously approached the door, and with bated breath whispered through the keyhole, "Is that you, Tammie?" Three mild responsive "wals" were given. Thus encouraged, Johnny opened the door, and in trotted Tammie hearty and hale. How he escaped from the strong ebb tide that was ruthlessly sweeping him away in the dread darkness of the night, is a mystery which he has not yet told. Perhaps he is

reserving it for future publication. The narrative will be deeply affecting, and on its appearance we shall not hesitate to give copious extracts from it. "Tammie" is not to be drowned again, and his mistress thus explains why she made the attempt:— "Weel, ye see, it's the auld story. Tammie is gey good lookin' and had ower mony lasses rinnin' after him; and them and him made sic a disturbance upon the stair that I was determined to get rid o' him."

END OF VOL. I.

Abyssinian.

The Property of

Mrs Captain Barrett Lennard.

Brought from Abyssinia at the conclusion of the War

DEAN & SON LONDON

CATS.

CHAPTER I.*

ORIGIN AND ANTIQUITY OF THE DOMESTIC CAT.

Gentle Reader,—I throw myself on your leniency. The other day my publisher beckoned me into his private office, behind the shop—a sanctum chiefly remarkable for the solemn air of dusty gloom, and the aristocratic cobwebbiness, which prevails in it; and says that gentleman to me,—

"You *must* give us a chapter on the origin and antiquity of the D. C."

"But," I implored, "I'm not writing about the ancestorial cat, plague take her! It is the history of the *present* puss, with glimpses of *the coming cat*, that I wish to give."

"Never mind," said he, "say something; people expect it."

"It will be so dry," I continued.

* Note. This chapter "is rote sarkastic."

"Then make it all the shorter."

Heigho! it is very like shoving a man forward by the shoulder, and asking him to make a speech, when he feels that he can't say Bo! to a goose; or putting a fiddle into one's hand, and asking him for a selection from his favourite opera, when he isn't in the humour to play; when, in fact, the fiddle feels like a pair of bellows, and the bow as heavy as the kitchen poker. Origin and antiquity indeed! I dreamt about origin and antiquity all night, and had origin and antiquity on the brain for a week after. However, needs must when the devil—hem! I mean one's publisher—drives.

Determined, therefore, to write a most learned essay on the origin and antiquity of the D. C., I ordered a cab one morning, and—

"Where for?" says Cabby, and—

"British Museum," says I.

Arrived at the reading room—N.B. I had taken a ream of foolscap with me, a box of Gillott's extra fine, and my brandy-flask filled (for this once only) with ink—"I want," said I, to a man who came at my

beck, "all the books you may have in this little place, which may bear reference directly or indirectly to the subject of *cats*. CATS, sir," I repeated more emphatically, because I thought he smiled. "Bring Herodotus, the father of cat-history, and Lady Cust, the mother of ditto; bring Jardine, and Rüppel, and Pennant, and Bell; also Temminck, Lonnini, and Hietro dello Valli; bring Daubenton the Egyptian, and Sulliman the Persian, Professor Owen, the erudite Darwin, and the learned Faust, and—Mephistopheles too, if procurable; and, look here, just throw in a few Russian, Hungarian, and Turkish authorities, and don't forget to bring lexicons to match." The man groaned, and went for a barrow. Half an hour afterwards I was seated at my desk, and if ever book-man had cause for joy, I was that individual. The illustrious authorities were piled so high above me, that an accident would have resulted in burial alive; they were behind me, before me, I sat upon them, and I had them for footstools. But still I was not happy. I leant my head on the ream of

foolscap, and tried to compose myself before I composed anything else. Presently I was roused from my reverie, by hearing some one close alongside of me make the remark, "Hem! hem!" clearing his throat as if to speak. On looking up, I beheld on the desk before me the queerest little old man ever I saw in my life. Taking him all and all, he couldn't have been anything like a yard long. His legs, not longer nor thicker than sheep shears, were encased in silken hose and knee-breeches; his shrivelled body bedecked in tight-fitting velveteens, with long hair tied in a cue and worn as a tail, while his face looked for all the world like a piece of ancient parchment, which had got accidentally wet, and been dried before the fire. And he sat with one leg crossed over his knee, on a folio nearly as big as himself, and took snuff.

"Ahem!" he remarked again, "take your pen, sir, and write."

I hastened to obey, merely asking parenthetically, "On cats?"

"On cats," was the reply.

"Far away in sunny Greece," continued

the little man, "484 years before the birth of Christ, and on a beautiful morning, when all nature looked fresh and gay, a fair and lovely girl might have been seen hastening—"

"Ah!" said I, "this will be interesting; heave round, ancient cockalorum."

"Hastening, sir, for the midwife. If the day was bright and fine, still more enchanting was the scenery, for it was the suburbs of the city of Halicarnassus, now called Budron, in the province of Caria. And that morning, exactly at ten o'clock, was born into the world a sweet little babe, afterwards the great and illustrious Herodotus.

"He wrote—indeed I may say sang, for his whole history is one noble poem—of the ancient Medes and Assyrians, and of the long line of Persia's kings; he sang the wars of Cyrus, and told the sad tale of the kingdom of Lydia, and he sung the wars of gallant Darius and the Scythians, and told of conquering Cambyses, and Egypt of the olden time; and last, but not least, sir, he wrote on *Cats* and *Cat-life*.

"Ay, sir, in Egypt in the good old times,

pussy had her rights, had appreciation, had justice. If a boy had killed a cat with a stone, or a man murdered her with a dog, Lynch law would have been had on the very spot. Pussy was gently tended, cared for, and loved even to veneration, while alive, and after death, her little body had the honours of embalmment; her virtues were written on monumental tablets, and her memory cherished by the bereaved owners until the day of their death. In Turkey too, and especially in Persia, cats have been household pets as far back as man can remember. In many places hospitals were built for them, something after the style and fashion of your modern cat-homes; and in so great esteem was she held, that bloody riots and war itself were not unfrequently the result of injury done, or insult offered to pussy. In the quaint but beautiful love-songs of ancient Persia, so full of splendid imagery, do we not often find the poet comparing the bright eyes of his mistress to those of gentle pussy, or her winning ways to those of the domestic cat?"

"The origin of the D. C. did you say, sir?"

"There is the tiger of Bengal, which you have seen at a distance—preferring no nearer acquaintance. There is the tiger-cat, or spotted leopard of Central Africa, which—I will do you the justice to say—you have shot; and there is the kolo-kolo of Guiana—"

"Isn't," insinuated I, "one kolo enough for a cat?"

"It is, sir," said the little man severely; "a cat of two colours, and a very vicious beast he is besides. There is the small serval of Africa, and the ocelot, all too well known to need a description. But from none of all these springs the domestic cat. Neither does it descend from the wild cat, still common enough in Skye and Sutherland, in the mountains of Ireland, and spread here and there throughout Europe. It must be regarded as quite a distinct species. Domestic pussy *will*, at odd times, escape to the hills, and, becoming a nomad, breed with the wild-cat; but the kittens will be found far different, both in markings and shape. No, sir,"

and here the little old man got very much excited, and took snuff so vehemently that the tears coursed down his wizened cheeks. "No, I fully believe with the to-be-immortal Darwin, that mankind is descended in a direct line from the *oyster*—"

"And how deliciously," said I, "our forefathers eat with buttered roll and stout."

"The *oyster*, sir," he repeated, not heeding the interruption; "and I do unhesitatingly believe, that cats sprang in an equally direct line from the *mussel*."

The little man then got into such an apparent ravel, among hard names and great unspellable authorities, that my head again drooped on the desk before me, and the next thing I remember, is the man—not the little old man; he had somehow or other mysteriously disappeared — touching me gently on the shoulder, and giving me to understand that it was time to be moving.

I did move. And I left the reading-room as wise—if not wiser—than when I entered it, on the origin and antiquity of the domestic cat.

CHAPTER II.

[*See Note A, Addenda.*]

CLASSIFICATION AND POINTS.

As the present work is not by any means intended to partake of the scientific, but is written solely with the view of gaining for the domestic cat her proper position in society, it will, I think, serve my purpose better to describe the classification of cats generally adopted at pussy-shows, instead of dividing them, as otherwise they ought to be, into the different species and breeds. Had I adopted the latter method, I should have felt bound to give a minute description of the cats of various countries and climates, such as those peculiar to India, China, Abyssinia, Russia, and Persia, as well as those inhabiting our own land.

The classification adopted at the Crystal Palace Show, and also at Birmingham, is —with one exception, to be mentioned further on—as good as any we can at present

have. The cats are divided into long-haired and short-haired of both sexes, the latter being mostly English, the former including the various species of Angora or Persian.

Class I. And first on the list comes *Tortoiseshell Tom.*

For many a long year, this cat was considered a myth and an impossibility; and this belief seemed to receive confirmation, when, at the first Crystal Palace Show, no Tortoiseshell Tom put in an appearance. He was all there, however, at the second; and people scratched their heads, and stared as they looked at him and said, "Well, then, to be sure, who would have thought it!"

He isn't a beauty by any means. I have seen some seals not unlike him about the head; and he looks as though he would take off his gloves on very slight provocation. This cat belongs to Mr. L. Smith, Clerkenwell, London; but I have no doubt there are many other Tortoiseshell Toms in the world. A friend of mine was telling

me last week, that he had had one, but that it only lived for three months.

I myself know of one other; I sent a humble but enthusiastic friend of mine to treat for its purchase, but in vain—they would not part with the cat, although they have not the slightest notion of its value.

"By George, Doctor," says my humble but enthusiastic friend, "if they won't sell him I'll steal him."

"For shame, Fred," say I. And I have suggested "cutting out" * as a more honourable expedient.

On the whole, nature seems to abhor a Tortoiseshell Tom as it does a vacuum, or a chicken with two heads.

Tortoiseshell cats are, as a rule, neither very large, nor very prepossessing. They have a sinister look about them, as though they would as soon bite you as not. I question too if they exhibit the same affection as other species. They are, however, excellent hunters, and brave to a fault.

* See, page 100, vol. I.

They will often fight with, and defeat, cats double their own weight and size.

Judged by: The comparative distinctness of markings, length and texture of *pelage* * (it ought to be longish and very soft and glossy) deepness of the shades of colour, entire absence of white, and general plumpness.

Class II. *Tortoiseshell and White.* Colour to be red, yellow, black, and white.

This cat ought to be, in size, rather larger than the former, not too leggy, with a round well-pleased head and bright eyes, with the patches of colour evenly and tastefully arranged, and the tints very decided.

Judged by: These qualities, and general condition of body and pelage.

Class III. *Brown Tabby.* Colour to be rich brown, striped and marked with black—no white. This is a class of very fine, noble cats. They are the true English cats, and, if well trained, possess all pussy's noblest attributes to perfection. They are docile, honest, and faithful, fond of children, careful mothers and brave fathers, though

* *Pelage* in *cat*ology = feather in *dog*ology.

seldom taking undue advantage of their great strength; and it is of them nearly all the best cat-stories are told.

Judged by: General size. They ought to be very large, long massive body, with shortish legs (especially fore-legs) and exhibiting great power with suppleness. Head ought to be large and round, with perpendicular stripes, converging rather towards the eye-brows, and branching off horizontally over the cheeks. The face ought to have an intellectual look—not sinister, and the ears—especially in the males—must be short.

The ground-work of brown, should be of a rich colour, and the markings on the body deeply black, and uniformly arranged. The pelage to be longer on the chest, and marked with one bar at least, giving the appearance of a Lord Mayor's Chain. The legs also ought to be striped transversely with black. Tail long and moderately bushy.

Class IV. *Blue or Silver Tabby.* Colour to be blue, or silver grey, striped and marked with black. I do not know a more lovely cat than this same Silver Tabby.

They are really quite elegant cats. Of a size rather smaller than the Brown Tabbies. They are more gracefully shaped, more lithe and quicker in all their movements. The head is also smaller and not so blunt, and the eyes piercingly bright; the ears too are a shade longer.

Judged by: General contour, and brightness of markings. Ground colour to be something like the grey of Aberdeen granite, and markings to be deep and well placed. Pelage close and glossy.

Class V. *Red Tabby.* Colour to be reddish, or sandy, marked with darker red, no white.

This splendid cat is, I am sorry to say, getting only too rare, and sadly needs encouragement, for if it is allowed to die out, where shall we get our favourite red and white cats? Where even our tortoise-shell? In some parts of the country, there is a very unjust prejudice against the colour of this cat. I beg then humbly to suggest to the committees of management of cat-shows, that they ought to give a little

stimulant to the breeding of this beautiful animal, in the shape of a rather higher prize. Indeed I think it would be a good plan, to make the amount of prize-money, in all classes, bear some sort of relation to the comparative rarity of the breed. This sort of handicapping would, I am sure, tend to equalize the number of entries for each class.

The Red Tabby ought to approach in size, and shape, nearly to the Brown. They are the same kind-hearted, good-natured animals as their brown brethren, and as a rule are better hunters. They go farther afield, and tackle larger game, and seldom forget to bring home at least a portion of each day's game-bag. They are often, moreover, very expert fishers.

Judged by: Size and general appearance; urbanity of countenance not to be overlooked. *Markings*—the ground colour to be a nice sandy colour, and the stripes a rich deep red, and in all respects the same shape as those on the Brown Tabby. The eyes deep-set and a beautiful yellow.

Class VI. *Red and White Tabby.* Colour to be reddish or sandy, marked with white. These are very fine cats, although, perhaps not very fashionable, but some that I have seen were very beautiful; especially one I remember in Wales, a very large cat, the white ground was like the driven snow, and the spots about the size of half-crowns, spread prodigally all over, like those in a well-bred Dalmatian dog; I do not think that two spots in all his body coalesced.

Judged by: Size—you want this cat largish. Brightness of colouring, and regularity of markings. Tail is long and not very bushy, and eyes yellow mostly.

Class VII. *Spotted Tabby.* Colour to be brown, blue, or light or dark grey, marked with black or white. At most cat-shows, a good deal of confusion exists, about what this cat ought really to be like, even among the best judges. There is plenty of latitude given as to colour. I like the brown, and the blue, and light or dark grey, and the black, but I abjure the white; at all

events we can very easily dispense with it. The cat I have in my mind's eye at the present moment, comes, I think, well up to the mark of what a Spotted Tabby should be like. He was a large "sonsy" animal, with broad brow and chest, short ears, and well-pleased face, quite the cat to sing lullabies at the farmer's fireside, or to romp in garden or on parlour floor with the squire's bright-eyed English children. His markings were as follows. The ground colour was dark grey; a broad black band ran along his back and down his fine tail; and diverging from this band came dark stripes of colour down the sides, converging round the thighs, and swirling round his chest in two Lord Mayor's chains; but the stripes had this peculiarity, they were all *broken up into spots*.

Class VIII. *Black and White.* Colour, black evenly marked with white. This is something more definite. The Black-and-white Tom cat is a large, handsome, gentlemanlike fellow, a sort of cat that you could not believe would condescend to do a dirty

action, or would hardly deign to capture a miserable mouse; and his wife is a perfect lady. I have never seen a more handsome specimen than Miss F——n's prize cat "Snowball." His eyes sparkle like emeralds; his nose and upper lip are pure white, but his chin is black. His shirt-front is spotless as the snow. He wears white gloves, not gauntlets —gauntlets, he told me, were snobbish, and only fit for low cats—and beautiful white stockings. This cat knocks with the knocker at the area door when he wants admission.

Judged by: Evenness of the markings; not too much white. Miss F——n's is a good example. Pelage to be thick and glossy, whiskers white, and eyes a deep sea-green.

Class IX. *Black.* Colour to be entirely black; no white. No, not a morsel of white can be here tolerated, not even on the point of the chin; although we often see pure black cats on whose coats Nature seems to have been amusing herself, by planting long single white hairs all over them. This is sometimes, but not always, the result of age.

This cat is, above all others, the best adapt-

ed for house-hunting; for his hearing and sight are extremely keen, and while seeing well in the dark, he is himself unseen. He is invaluable to those whose goods are liable to become a prey to vermin. He is a fierce cat when angered, but not naturally quarrelsome.

Judged by: Size. They ought to be large, but with more grace of motion than the Brown Tabby. Colour, all jet black, and pelage glossy and thick. Whiskers to be black as well. Eyes: green eyes better than yellow, but hazel or brown better than either.

Class X. *White.* Colour to be entirely white: no black. These cats make very pretty parlour cats when they are bright in colour. Millers often prefer them as hunters to black cats, thinking, perhaps with reason, that they are not so easily seen among the bags. A perfectly white cat is a very nice and affectionate pet; but they are often dull and apathetic. Some of them, too, are *deaf.*

Judged by: General condition of pelage and symmetry of body. Ought to be graceful, and not too languid-looking. Must be

entirely white. Eyes: ought to be blue, although they are too often yellow. Eyes ought to be *both blue*. It is a defect to have eyes of different colours.

Class XI. *Unusual Colour.* Colour to be any remarkable hue not otherwise classified.

Judged by: Colour, shape, size, and symmetry. A very beautiful and graceful little cat, I saw at the Birmingham Show. It belongs to a Mr. S. Lawrence, and is called "Maltese," although I never saw anything like it in that island. It was all of one colour—a strange sort of slate-colour or blue: even the whiskers were of the same hue. The nose was tipped with black, and the eyes were orange yellow.

Class XII. *Any other Variety or Abnormal Formation.* Any colour, but of singular form, such as Manx or six-clawed cats.

This class, I think, deserves but little encouragement. What do we want with cats with six claws? and—this is sarcasm—cats without tails ought to be ashamed of themselves. Besides, if you bring me young kittens, I shall, with the aid of a gum lancet,

and a needle and thread, make you Manx cats as fast as winking; and I think I could do so less clumsily than has been done to some Manx (?) cats I lately saw at Birmingham. And, talking of Birmingham, there was one cat exhibited there in this class, which, as a Naval officer, I must be permitted to have a shy at. Was it a Manx? No; very much the reverse, for, whereas a Manx cat has no tail, this brute had no fewer than nine. It was labelled "Garotters back-biter," and hailed from Millbank prison. I wish it were confined to that prison, or to any prison. By all means use it on the backs of garotters. Tickle them up with it three times a day if you choose. But why, in this civilized age, should this brutal weapon be still raised against our brave blue-jackets, who defend our coast and homes, and fight our battles both by sea and land. Soldiers are now exempt from the lash; are sailors less deserving? If not, why should a naval seaman be classed in the same catalogue, and used in the same way, as that most mean and cowardly of all creatures—the garotter?

Ugh! the scenes I have witnessed in my own short time in the service, I would not chill the blood of the reader by describing. But this cat-o'-nine-tails has been, and is still, often used in the service, by officers in command, not as an instrument of punishment, but of wrath and revenge, against some poor fellow who may have unwittingly incurred their displeasure. Then look at the demoralizing effect it has on the mind and character. I have seen a brave honest man lashed up to the grating, and receive his punishment in silence, and I have seen the same man, pale and ghastly, cast loose—the blood from his bitten lips trickling over his neck—but how changed! good no longer, but reckless. And I've marked his future career, and seen him, in plain language, go post-haste to the devil. Can you conceive of anything more cowardly than to tie a poor fellow hand and foot, and make a brutal attack on his person? I have seen a commander—thank God such men are few: smirking to himself, as he looked on a strong man writhing in silent agony, and I have

glanced from the one to the other and thought, "*He* is the *hero*—*you*, cocked hat, sword, and all—are the *villain*." Discipline must be upheld, if we would continue to rule the seas; but banish the cat, it can easily be dispensed with; or, if it must be retained, let it be the terror only of thieves. If a man errs, punish him, shoot him where he stands if his crime deserves it, but, Avaunt dishonour! do not flog him.

On the judging of long-haired cats very few words will suffice.

The classes, are, *Tortoiseshell and White*, *Tabby*, *Red Tabby*, *Pure White*, *Black*, and *Unusual Colour*.

These classes must be *judged by*:—Markings, which are wanted as distinct and well arranged as possible. Size—they ought to be large cats. Pelage—ought to be *very long* silken, and glossy. The eyes should be of the same colour as in the short-haired classes.

The head of the male Persian should be very broad and characteristic; and the ears short, well feathered internally, and pointing

downwards and forwards. In the female, the head is much smaller and sharper.

In the pure Black cats, the hair is not so fine; and it is at times parted down the centre like that of a well-bred Newfoundland dog.

Miss Hales's Angora, "Selim," is a very fine specimen—slate-coloured on the body, the face vandyked with white, and a beautiful snowy apron in front. His eyes are green and sparkling; and from his cage he glares out at you with a look of surly grandeur, highly characteristic of his noble breed.

The same lady's "Zuleika," a pussy imported from Smyrna, is a most lovely and engaging little thing—all white, with small round head, long hair, and pitiful eyes, as if it wanted so much to be petted—in fact just lived to be loved, and nothing else. It is a pet fit for a princess.

It is the classification of the "Cats of no Sex" which I think might be altered for the better. By the bye, what a ridiculous denomination—"cats of *no* sex"!

I think I see Lord Dundreary, after read-

ing the catalogue, moralizing on his finger ends.

"Catth of no theckth—that ith, neither mathculine nor feminine,—let me thee,—why, they mutht be neuter catth—catth without life. Hi! Tham; I thay, old man, they're going to hold a thow of *dead catth*."

Children and ladies often ask ridiculous questions about these wonderful "cats of no sex."

Why not boldly adopt the terms "Entire cats" and "Non-entire cats," and stick to them? *Honi soit qui mal y pense!* * Now "non-entire cats" are excellent hunters and good home pets; and, if well cared for, they become very large and beautiful, although they do at times become lazy and fat. Why then should they not have as many classes to compete in as the "entire" cats?

But there is a greater mistake still made in the judging. They are judged *by weight only*. The reader can easily see, then, that there is no encouragement given to any one

* Honey, suet, marlingspikes, and pens.—*Jack's translation.*

to breed a beautiful cat; and at all cat-shows, you will be surprised to find very ugly cats labelled *first and second* prize, next cage to a perfect beauty, whose only misfortune was, that he had no appetite for breakfast that morning, and consequently lost the prize by two ounces—*of beef-steak.* No; these cats must be judged by their other qualities, of course giving a certain number of points for entra weight. Example—I happen to know a cat which I'll back for ugliness, against any puss in the three kingdoms. He was originally white, but is now beautifully ornamented with cinder holes all over; his face is seamed with bloody scars, got in honourable conflict; and you ought just to see that cat throw back the remains of his ears and scowl. I ought to have entered him at last Birmingham Show—he would have been first; but, as the lassie said, I "didna like." But, if there is no alteration by next year, Egad! he shall go to Birmingham and the Crystal Palace too; and I think for weight he'll beat at both places.

Wild Cats. These animals are still to be

found in some of the most solitary regions of Skye and Sutherland: and, I am told, they are sometimes seen in the mountainous parts of Connemara. Like the brown Tabby of domesticity, they vary considerably in their markings; but they can never be mistaken for any other. As a rule, the ground colour is yellowish grey, with dark stripes—the markings being at times, as even and beautiful as those of the Bengal tiger. The tail is shorter, and more bushy than that of the domestic cat; and the head, if once seen, or the voice, if once heard, can never be forgotten. Those I have seen killed, were all anything but fat, or even in very good condition, showing, I think, that their life must be rather a hard and miserable one.

On the north-west shore of the Isle of Skye, between Kilmuir manse and the romantic ruin called Duntulm Castle, stands a mountain,—or rather one half of a mountain, the other half, by some gigantic agency, is levelled to the ground, and lies spread over the sea-shore in acres of large boulders—the precipitous sides of the cleft mountain rising

up at one side, and the waves of the Atlantic for ever thundering on the other. A road has been made straight over these boulders. Late one summer's night I was coming home along this road, all alone with the exception of a little wire-haired terrier called Kooran. I was just about the centre; the moon was well down in the West, and cast my shadow far over the heaps of stones. I was gazing up at the beetling cliffs above me and wondering whether any one would ever find the hidden treasure of gold and precious stones which, they say, lies buried in a cave somewhere on this mountain's side, watched over by a malignant fairy (*see Note B, Addenda*), when I was startled from my reverie by a sound which I should in vain attempt to describe. It was partly growl, partly scream, —angry, mournful, horrible. Kooran's tail sought instant refuge between his legs; and although I had on a decent-sized Scotch bonnet, which might weigh somewhere over two pounds, I think my hair raised it; at any rate my legs seemed suddenly to become ethereal, and I did not feel the ground

beneath my feet until I had rounded the distant corner, and left both cat and mountain a good mile behind me. The prey of the Wild Cat is principally rabbits, and game of different sorts; and in the month of May they sometimes commit great depredations among the young lambs. Of course the keepers trap and shoot them on every possible occasion. It is not very often, however, that they manage to get a shot at them, it being the habit of the wild-cat to lie *perdu* all day, coming out only at night to hunt their quarry, or at early morning. Several stories of adventures with these dreadful creatures could be told, if space permitted. I shall only mention one, which I do not think has yet found its way into print. (*See Note C, Addenda.*)

Liddesdale, it will do the reader no harm to know, is the southermost parish in Roxburghshire. Some years ago a shepherd who used to reside here left for the Highlands. He had a family of boys. One day, while these lads were running about among the hills and woods, they started a large wild

cat, and—for keepers' children know no fear —at once gave chase. Puss took to a tree. Thinking they were now sure of her, one of the boys took his jacket off, and prepared to climb and dislodge her; while the others stood round with stones, to do for her when she came down. They saw their brave companion climb the tree; they saw the monster come down to meet him, and fasten on his neck. They looked up horrified; there was scarcely a cry, save the low growl of the cat; a few drops of blood came pattering down, and then the children ran off screaming towards home. The father was soon on the spot, joined by some men with dogs. One of these instantly drew his knife and commenced to climb the tree. The enraged brute now left the boy and came down to attack the man; but the struggle was brief; the cat was dashed, wounded, to the ground, where it was speedily despatched by the dogs and men. But there was no sound from above. The poor boy was found lying on his back athwart the branches, his head and arms drooping downwards—*dead*.

CHAPTER III.

PUSSY'S PATIENCE AND CLEANLINESS.

NEXT to a cat's love for children, if there is one thing more than another that ought to make one love her and respect her as a pet, it is the extreme patience which she evinces under sufferings, sometimes the most acute. We talk about dogs being game, and taking their death easy; and so they mostly do under excitement; but in long lingering illnesses, pussy is a much better patient.

Pussy, moreover, is blessed with extreme good-nature, and will pardon almost any injury from one she loves. I have no patience with people who say that cats are unforgiving, or that "a friendship of years may be cancelled in a moment, by an accidental tread on its tail or feet." "Look," the same parties will tell you, "how patiently a dog will bear a like accident."

Ay; but, say I, you must bear in mind three things:—First, a dog is generally larger

than a cat, and a tread is consequently a mere trifle to him. Secondly, a cat is ten times more sensitive to pain than a dog. And, thirdly, a cat has so many enemies of all sorts, that she must be for ever on the alert to avert danger; not knowing when a foe may pounce upon her, she has to sleep even with open ears. Is it any wonder, then, that, when roused from slumber by a cruel and painful tread on her tail, she should start up and show fight, or run off growling—perhaps, indeed, only half-awake? But malice she never harbours in her heart; and in half an hour, when she has thought the matter over, she will creep from under the sofa or bed, to fondly caress the very one who hurt her.

No animal appreciates kindness more than a cat. Witness the gratitude even a poor stray will evince, to any one who may have fed it when hungry.

"Not long ago," writes a lady to me, "a cat (one of the kind kept as a machine) used to frequent our garden, starved enough, poor thing, as its knotty fur betokened; so, having a trap set in our house to catch mice, and

being always more or less successful in catching the vermin, I one day took the trap, with a mouse in it, to the garden, and by dint of very little persuasion, managed to get near this cat waif, and give it the mouse. That was quite enough; it got them ever after, so long as it was in life; and invariably from that date whenever it saw me in the garden, it would come bounding to me. And I am sure, by its dumb delight, it well repaid me, showing that it fully appreciated both the voice, and hand of kindness." (*See Note D, Addenda.*)

It is this same patience in her nature, that makes our domestic cat such an excellent hunter and vermin killer. We all know how patiently she will sit in a corner, and watch for a mouse or rat. She knows very well it will come sooner or later, and she is always rewarded with success. She is the same in the hunting-field, waiting for hours at the door of a rabbit-burrow, till poor Bunny, or some one of her children, peeps out; then, "I'll have you," says puss, and forthwith walks it off. Or, hidden under a

heather hillock, or a turnip-leaf, she will wait and wait, and never weary, until she can secure a beautiful grouse, or plump little partridge. Witness their patience and long-suffering with children,—this I have already spoken about, and need not repeat,—having proved, in a former chapter, that they not only bear, but even seem to like, a certain amount of rough treatment at baby hands.

Tucker was about the best-natured lump of a cat I ever knew. You might have done anything with him—flung him over the church for instance. If you had, I dare be sworn, Tucker would have alighted on his feet at the other side, and gone quietly off to sleep. No, he was not a particularly good hunter, he was hardly cruel enough to kill a mouse; but he had a spirit of his own for all that, and if you had shaken your finger at him, he would have let you have it straight from the shoulder. (*See Note E, Addenda.*)

Tucker used to submit himself, quietly, to be tied up in a towel, and placed in a scale opposite a leg of mutton, or Scotch cheese. He was once sent a distance of thirty yards,

trussed up in this fashion, to a shopkeeper's place, to be weighed. Tucker went through the operation so patiently, that the grocer never suspected till the very last.

"A good solid hare," he said, feeling the bundle; "but bless me, isn't he warm? Do you think he is really dead?"

"Err-a-wa-ow," said Tucker, popping out his head at a corner, as much as to say, "Not just yet, friend;" and the laugh was all against the grocer.

How patiently a cat will wait for her dinner, until every one else is served, reminding you only then, by her loud singing and demonstrative kindness, that there is still a little hole in her stomach that wants filling! And, how patiently sit and wait, and watch for the return of her master or mistress, be they never so long absent! She knows their footsteps, and jumps up at their knock, and runs to the door to meet them.

I know of a poor cat that was for a whole fortnight in a trap. The cruel keepers had left him for all that time, without either food or drink; he was afterwards discovered

by his owner, and taken home. Although a beautiful large Tom tabby when he left home, he was reduced to a perfect skeleton. His leg had to be amputated; but he bore the operation without flinching, struggling a little at first only, but giving vent to no expression of pain. He made a very good recovery; but, being one of the mighty-hunter persuasion, as soon as he was perfectly recovered, he hopped off to the woods again. He did not return, however, and for two years was not seen again; but one dark night, his master, on passing through a wood, had his attention attracted by the cries of a cat. The animal was in a tree; and, on the gentleman's approach, it sprang down, and commenced rubbing round his legs, with every expression of affection and kindness. On bending down to caress it, the gentleman was surprised to find it had only three legs. It followed him home, and he then made certain it was none other than his long-lost pet. It stopped at home for many a day after this, and seemed in no way inconvenienced from the loss of its hind-leg. But

travellers never can settle, and puss took to the woods again, and this time fell a victim to the keeper's vengeance. (*See Note F, Addenda.*)

Another cat of my acquaintance was in like manner caught in a trap, and had to endure amputation of the leg; although in much suffering and pain, it bore it without a murmur.

"I witnessed, only last week," says a young lady, "while residing with my married sister, down in Kent, an instance of great patience and endurance in a cat. A Dandie Dinmont dog was dragging her round and round the garden walks by the tail, and instead of being annoyed, pussy seemed really to enjoy it."—(*See Note G, Addenda.*)

Cats know as well as a human beings, that, when you are examining and treating their hurts—whether inflicted by traps or stones—you mean to do them good. Cats, even strange cats, often lick my hands when I am probing a wound and inflicting the most severe pain on them.

Cats always show gratitude by licking

your hand; it is the greatest compliment a cat can pay you, for they are not so ready as dogs, to sow their kisses and caresses broad-cast.

I was amused the other day, at seeing the care and attention a little girl was bestowing on a pet cat. Tom had been out all night, and came in next day on three legs; the one he carried was wounded, bruised, and much swollen, and Tom himself looked generally seedy and out of sorts. Now, had it been a boy instead of a girl, he would, in all probability, have done nothing useful. But females are always practical; and this embryo Miss Nightingale, after having a good cry, set about at once to put matters straight for poor Tom. She bathed the leg in warm water, and encircled it with a large poultice. Then she rolled him in an old shawl, and put him to bed in a basket. Tom kept his bed for ten days, during which time, she fed him from a plate, not allowing him to get up; and every time the poultice was changed, the cat licked her hand in evident gratitude. In fact, Tom made the best of patients,

being more like a sincere Christian than anything else; and his little nurse was finally rewarded, by having her pet gambolling around her as usual.

A cat, some time ago, received a charge of ragged shot in his shoulder. He fainted from loss of blood, and afterwards had high fever, just as a human being would have done, under like circumstances. The greater portion of the shot was extracted, or worked out in the process of healing; one portion, however, pussy carried to his grave with him. During the painful process of having his wounds probed for shot, pussy never even groaned. (*See Note H, Addenda.*)

But it is in long and severe illnesses that pussy's patience is best exemplified.

A poor cat, many years ago, took a severe illness—jaundice. He was a fine large Tom cat, of the name of Tacket, and a very great pet; but in a short time he got reduced to a mere bag of bones; his fine fur came out in parts, and in parts hung about him like tassels. So pitiful an object looked he, that his master and

mistress had the sin of keeping him alive forcibly pointed out to them by their friends. Indeed, he was now so weak as to be unable to move from his bed by the kitchen fire. On the 10th day, when he was at his very worst, a little raw meat was given him; and, his head being supported, he managed to swallow it. This was the turning point of his illness; he began to rally, and soon got well, and plump, and sleek; and the other day died at the age of twelve. But it was a treat to see how patiently poor Tacket bore his illness. Every morning, when his master went to see him, although he could not rise, he tried to sing. But the power of purring left him as he got weaker; on the 9th day he could just sing one bar, and on the 10th day only one note. This cat had a great dislike, for months afterwards, to milk in any shape or form; from having been continually dosed with it while sick, he used positively to shiver at the sight of it. (*See Note I, Addenda.*)

But I have, I believe, said enough to

ANGORA.

First Prize—Owned by Miss M. Armitage.

PERSIAN.

First Prize—Owned by — Mongredian, Esq.

prove pussy's clain to the virtues of both patience and gratitude.

Habits of Cleanliness in Cats. It must be allowed, that of all our domestic pets, pussy undoubtedly bears the bell for personal cleanliness. Nature has adorned her with a most beautiful coat, of the softest, silkiest fur and loveliest of colours; and she spares no pains to keep it clean and smart. I firmly believe that the cat is very proud of her appearance, and likes to cut a dash—here again, by the bye, she resembles the female of the human family. Pussy is for ever cleaning and washing at herself. If a well-bred parlour cat, she will never allow a speck of dirt to sully her fur. I can always tell whether a cat is properly cared for, and has sufficient food, by the appearance of her coat. If she is allowed to be hungry, or is badly housed, she soon loses all taste in herself, and doesn't care a rat's tail how she looks.

When a cat's coat begins to appear rough and stare, it is the first indication of approaching illness; and this symptom

will never be unattended to by those who love their pet.

I have known cats take ill and die from having their coats accidentally soiled beyond remedy.

CHAPTER IV.

TRICKS AND TRAINING.

Some of the tricks which cats perform are highly amusing. Of course I refer to our fireside puss, and not to publicly performing cats; these require special training, and a large amount of educating. But almost any cat will, either of her own accord or with very little teaching, perform antics and capers enough to amuse children at least, if not indeed to make older people smile.

Cats must be trained when young; and the very first thing you must teach them is *to love you*. If you can accomplish this, they will learn almost anything.

Cats have great jumping power naturally; and this power can be greatly increased, by proper exercise in the days of their kitten-hood. They can spring almost incredible distances, either up or down. My

own favourite, when one year old, used to jump clean over the parlour door, fetching away a bit of meat that had been placed on the top. The best method of instructing a cat in leaping heights, is to place bits of food at different elevations, and encourage her to bring them down. She will soon be able to spring seven or eight feet easily; and this same exercise will stand her many a good turn, in her predatory excursions in the field, or her amatory perambulations on the tiles. I have seen a cat, thus trained, spring from one house-top to another, a distance of fully ten feet; there were three other cats, but none dared follow her. I know of a cat, of the extraordinary weight of 22 lbs., that springs with apparent ease from the parlour-floor on to a door over six feet high. (*See Note K, Addenda.*)

At Preston, the other day, my lady Muff chose to declare herself "on the spree." As usual on such occasions, half a dozen Toms came to serenade her; and loudly they sang of her charms. The night being

muggy and wet, I determined to keep her ladyship within doors, so Theodore Nero was sent out to reason with her lovers, while I shut puss up in the bedroom. In this act of incarceration I was encouraged by the starling, who was busy examining the anatomy of the pin-cushion, but who left off boring holes to say,—

"Bravo, doctor! *Br-ravo!*"

"I'll *bravo* you, presently, if you don't mind," said Muff as plainly as eyes and eyebrows could speak. Muff was exceedingly wroth.

"Is—is—*is* cats to be trusted?" remarked Dick musingly to himself, as he re-commenced playing Old Harry with the pin-cushion. Now the bed-room window was just twenty feet from the ground, and had been left open at the top. When I went up to bed, I unlocked the door and entered cautiously—for I knew all her tricks and manners. The starling was perched on the looking-glass, asleep, and Muffie was gone. The blind was disarranged. She had jumped over. I went down with

a carpet-bag, to look for her remains; but there weren't any. Muffie came in at tea-time next day, seedy rather, but triumphant.

Another capital plan to teach a cat to leap a height, is to attach a hare's foot to a piece of string at the end of a fishing rod, and set it in motion. You can thus regulate the elevation to pussy's daily increasing capabilities. I have seen a cat bring her kittens to this gymnasium, and teach the whole four of them to jump and seize the hare's foot, which she herself used to set in motion.

A very common trick, is to teach pussy to jump through your arms. Begin by holding them low between your legs; having taught her to leap thus, hold them to one side, and make her jump either way backwards and forwards. Gradually increase the height, till, standing erect, you form a large P, and puss springs through the bend of it. Then hold your arms right above you, slightly bending your neck and your cat—presuming the reader is anything

under seven feet high—shall leap right over your head.

Very pretty and effective exercise for a cat, is hoop-leaping. It costs little trouble to teach, and every cat will learn it. For this, you must be provided with a little switch, not to hit the cat, but merely to make a noise in the air. Pronounce the word "hoop" each time you hold the article in front of her, and she will soon learn to go through in whatever position you hold it. Or you may have a series of hoops, at different elevations, placed in the garden, a few yards apart; or, better still, hung from the couples of a barn or grain-loft. On these last a young and healthy cat soon becomes quite a wonderful performer; and, if you wish her to be still more highly educated in the hoop business, you can dip your hoop in methylated spirits of wine and set fire to it; she will go through just the same. Or cover the hoop with thin tissue paper, and teach her to go through it. At first the paper must be oiled, so as to be nearly transparent. A friend of

mine, coming home at twelve o'clock the other night, heard an awful noise and rattling in an out-house which he had fitted up as a cat gymnasium. On going in with a light, he was surprised to find two full-grown kittens performing—they had been giving a dark *séance* on their own account.

After any performance, you must never forget to reward poor puss with food and water, which latter, on these occasions, she will prefer to milk. Cats, you know, are not very fond of music, still I have known them taught to move rhythmically to it.

The hearth-rug is the arena on which puss may be taught to perform a variety of tricks. I know a cat that, if you ask her to show you how a hare lies in the market, throws herself on the floor on her side, and, stretching her fore-legs and hind-legs in a line with her body, lies there, to all appearance dead, till you bid her rise.

I know a cat that turns somersaults on request. You can easily teach a cat to beg after the fashion of a broken-haired terrier, as also to give a paw—right or left, and to

jump on your knee, and, placing its two fore-legs one on each side of your neck, execute quite a theatrical embrace. Or you may make her stand in a corner on her hind-legs, until requested to drop down. I know a pussy that jumps on a chair at the bidding of her mistress, and, placing her fore-paws over the back, rests her head on them, and simulates sleep. Indeed, nothing is more easy than to teach a cat to open or shut her eyes at the word of command. (*See Note L, Addenda.*)

There are two things which every household puss may, and ought to be, taught, viz., to come and lie down quietly by the fire or on the sofa, when told, and to "watch," that is, to sit by a mouse hole, where you know a mouse to be, until she catches it; but you must never deceive her.

I know of a daft little puss who sits on her master's shoulder at dinner; and when he is about to treat himself to some specially tempting morsel, cleverly snatches it from the fork as he is putting it to his mouth, and transfers it to her own. She does it with such an apparent appreciation of the fun of

the joke, that no one could be angry with her. (*See Note M, Addenda.*)

You can easily teach your cat to become an expert fisher, by throwing half-dead minnows on the top of the water, and encouraging her to jump in and seize them.

Cats can be taught to ring the bell and to open the door.

But whatever other tricks or performances you may care to teach her, it is very much for pussy's future welfare that she should, when young, have plenty of leaping exercise; and if, at the same time, you make a good retriever of her, she will form the habit of always bringing home her prey. For, with all due respect for the game laws, I do like to see a cat come trotting home in the gloaming, with a nice young leveret or a plump partridge in her mouth; nobody is any the poorer, and her master has something nice for supper. You teach a cat to retrieve with a hare's foot. Teach her in the parlour first, then by flinging the plaything out of doors. She will soon learn to bring it in and lay it at your feet. A

freshly-killed bird may then be used, and you will very soon have the satisfaction of seeing her invariably bring home her quarry.

In the country, but only in the country, you may teach your cat to follow you in your walks just like a dog, and she will never lose you either by night or day.

Cats come to your "whistle" much better than to any other call.

In training this interesting animal, you must have every consideration for her failings and weaknesses, and must never forget that she will do almost anything, for one who loves her and treats her with kindness.

Inculcate habits of cleanliness in grown cats. There are times when, through accident or having been shut in a room, even the most highly-trained cat will deviate from the paths of decency. Never altogether overlook a thing of this sort. Take the cat, gently, but firmly, to the place, and show her you are angry—cats are dreadfully frightened at a scolding—this will generally prevent a repetition of the offence. But if the

same thing should occur again, and there is no excuse of a closed room or a locked door, then corporeal punishment becomes necessary. But it must not be severe, or all remembrance of her crime will be lost in the pain of the correction. Cats are very delicate, and easily injured about the head. Carry her at once to the scene of her misdemeanour, and ask her if she sees it, then with a little bit of whalebone switch her several times across the fore-paws; or tips only of the ears, and turn her outside the front door. But in no case should correction partake of the nature of revenge.

If the cat-fancier will attend to these simple rules, he will have cats that he will be proud of, and they will be proud of him.

CHAPTER V.

CRUELTY TO CATS.

I THINK it my duty to warn the reader that this is essentially a chapter of horrors; so that if her or his feelings do not tend in that direction, it may be skipped. If it pains any one to read it, it must be remembered that it was much more painful to me to write it; and only the hope of enlisting the sympathy of the kind-hearted and benevolent in pussy's favour could have induced me to do so. How far I have been successful, time will tell. Indeed, I believe the day is not far distant, when it will become the fashion, nay even a portion of our religion, to treat all animals, from the dog downwards, with kindness and consideration; and, when necessity determines life to be taken, to take it in the least cruel and most humane manner possible. A good and noble work has been begun by the Royal Society for Prevention

of Cruelty to Animals. All honour to it, and success to its organ, *The Animal World.* The field is indeed a wide one; and one can scarcely help feeling almost despairingly, as he looks abroad upon the world, and sees the vast amount of cruelty there is to suppress. But stone by stone old Rome was built; and as the good work advances, the labourers will increase, and success in the end is certain. As the case now stands, I think the assistance, of the pulpit by precept, and of the great and rich by example, is sadly wanted to support the cause. The efforts of the Society are at present more particularly directed to obtaining convictions against offenders for ill-treating, overloading, or torturing horses and donkeys; for improperly conveying and starving cattle, calves, pigs, and goats; for cruelties to birds, and for ill-using dogs and cats. Alas! poor pussy comes last and least. But, as the world advances in civilization, and becomes more humane, new laws will have to be framed, anent the great ocean of cruelty, the waves of which we see tumbling and break-

ing around us every day, and making us apathetic, because of their very number and our own inability to oppose them.

Why should horses be for ever worked to death, or till death? Why should their labours and hardships be increased, with their increasing years and infirmities? We care for and love them when young and handsome; when they grow old we forget their former services, ill-treat and starve them, and finally thrash them into the knacker's yard.

Why should donkeys—those patient, much-enduring animals—be all their poor lives treated with such systematic brutality?

Why should cattle of all sorts be driven to the markets, or conveyed by rail or steam-boat for long dreary journeys, without either food or water? Why should they be slaughtered with so little regard to their sufferings, when the sting of death could be so easily drawn, ere the fatal blow was struck?

Why should turkeys, fowls, geese, and ducks be carried to market, with feet tied, and hung over poles head downwards, or

huddled together in cramped baskets, and kept, sometimes, in such pain and suffering that death itself must be sweet relief?

Why should pigeons, and other smaller birds, be shot in so cowardly and inhumane a manner as is the fashion at matches in the present day? Cockfighting itself is much less cruel; for there each bird has a chance of life, and the wounded are slain.

For the numerous cruelties inflicted on fishes, we can hardly name a remedy yet; but has the reader ever thought of the agony which must be endured by the lobster and crab in being boiled alive?

All these outrages on animal life might be prevented or greatly ameliorated by just and proper laws. England, I trust, will be the first to take the lead in this matter; and, depend upon it, that nation's arm will always be the strongest on the day of battle, that, in the time of peace, is employed in labours of love, and in the advancement of civilization and humanity.

The Mohammedans are far before us in kindness to the lower animals. "Accursed

be he who spilleth blood," is one of their sayings.

Now, the Hindoos, for instance, are a much older nation than we are. They were clothed, and in their right minds, thousands of years before we were out of pig-skin kilts and paint. We are trying to learn from theory what they have found out from long experience, and will no doubt arrive at the same conclusions after the loss of much valuable time. I know a gentleman who puts faith in no statement in the abstract, even if the speaker should be as old as Methuselah—which isn't often the case—and as wise as Ahab, until he has carefully ground, as it were, the syllogism in his own mill, thoroughly sifted it, and microscopically examined it; then he looks surprised, smiles, and says, "By George, old Thingummy was right after all." He can't help it however; it is the result of a too liberal education. He is constantly grinding away at a proverb. Now, I think proverbs are the pith of a nation's experience: the wisdom of a country is skimmed off, boiled, evaporated to dryness,

burned to get rid of organic impurities, and the residue washed and distilled, and the essential oil bottled—in a proverb. But my learned friend, on first hearing one, says, "Oh, nonsense! Can't be." The proverb haunts him, however, both by night and day, for perhaps a fortnight, perhaps longer, until it is properly thought out in all its bearings; *then* he believes it—not before. He would save much time by having a little more credulity; but he is getting wise, and if he lives long enough he will be very wise indeed, although the process may cost him his teeth—he is bald already.

The Hindoos have, long ago, come to the conclusion that it is wrong to take life, and accordingly they don't—barring that they murder their wives when it is required. I think they are right, although I myself draw the line at naval cockroaches; and the fact that they are disagreeable things to kill, may have something to do with my sparing them. Besides, a cockroach has so many relations, and these all come to his funeral, and insist on seeing him decently interred.

This ceremony they perform by tasting, tasting at him until nothing remains.

I was one day "counting my pieces" to my Indian washerman, on the deck of my cabin, when out from the bosom of a night-shirt dropped a nine-inch-long centipede in the full vigour of health and intellect, and began making the best of his way to the nearest shelter. Giving instant chase, and having the advantage in length of legs, if not in number, I should soon have run him down, had not the impudent Hindoo, at the very last moment, pulled me back by my frock-coat tails. Such an indignity to a British officer, on board a British man-o'-war, was hardly to be borne with impunity. I turned, and looking him full in the face in my most impressive manner—

"Sir," said I, "are you aware that Britons never, *never*, NEVER—will—be—slaves?"

The dobee salaamed.

"Then," continued I, "what have you got to say, that I should not punch your head or kick your rascally shins, for conniving at the escape of yonder centipede

that has just gained his crevice, and is, even now, making faces at me with impunity?"

The dobee drew himself up.

"Sahib," said he, "you can kickee my head, you can punchee my shin—all same. Allah is good, and the Koran say, 'Thou shalt not kill.'"

"*Thou shalt not kill*," repeated I; "why, the man must have learned the 'Shorter Catechism;' he can't be such a heathen after all."

The dobee triumphed. I shook him by the hand, and he had my washing ever after.

Enter my servant one day. I was living in a room on shore at Bombay.

"Man come for your little ones, Sahib," said he.

"Pandoo," said I in a solemn voice, "what do you mean? I'm a respectable unmarried man, and never deserved any."

The man, who entered behind Pandoo, carried a shovel, a brush, and a basket; and I soon discovered that my little ones meant all

the earwigs, bugs, centipedes, and crickets, of which I had a fair sprinkling of each sort; and he came, not to destroy, but actually to carry them away. He swept my room and bed moderately clean, and I afterwards found that he had taken the contents of the basket to the corner of a field, and emptied them among some straw. For no true Buddhist takes life; and when cows and horses get infirm, they are regularly superannuated, and sent to an asylum where they may end their days in peace.

The scenes of cruelty to the lower animals, which one witnesses in the streets and lanes of our own country, are almost enough to make one doubt the goodness of God. In many cases, a person at all sensitive cannot refrain from interfering; and, unless he can show some proper authority for so doing, he will in most cases come off second-best, and do harm to the very victim he meant to protect. I have often constituted myself a sort of knight-errant to distressed quadrupeds; and I flatter myself I have at times done some good, either by going quietly up

to the perpetrator of the cruelty and trying to reason with him, or, with a pretended show of authority, demanding his name and address. A man of this sort is always a coward, and usually "funks" at once. I once had my nose broken, though, in a row with a butcher about ill-treating a cow. That brought my knight-errantry to a bloody close for a fortnight; but, thanks to good surgery, the organ is none the worse.

Last February, while walking in a lane in the neighbourhood of a rural village, I met a fellow—certainly the most brutal lout ever I saw—driving, or rather pushing along, two unhappy sheep. The creatures had walked a very long distance, and appeared completely exhausted; for the wind was very high, and the cold rain and sleet were beating in their faces, and stupifying them. Besides, the scoundrel had been striking them with a strong black-thorn cane; and, as he dared not touch them about the body, for fear of injuring the appearance of the mutton,—for mutton they

soon would be,—it was across the forehead and nose he hit them, so the blood was trickling down in streams, and as they shook their heads with pain, their pretty fleeces were all besmeared. Oh, the amount of misery depicted in their poor patient eyes! The very dogs seemed ashamed of their master's conduct.

"It's to be killed, they are to be, at any rate," said the fellow when I remonstrated with him on his conduct; "and, curse them," he cried, "I'll make them go." And again the blows began to fall. The sheep moaned low, and I closed with my friend. A vicious tussle, and the stick flew over the hedge. Then the lout flew at me. He hit my fist a tremendous blow with his lower jaw, the result of which was, that he immediately took the world on his back, like old Atlas—he took the world on his back several times before he seemed tired of it. Then I gave him to understand, that by way of recompense for knocking him down, I should at once find a policeman to take him up, unless he immediately

accompanied me to a neighbouring killing-house, to get a butcher to slaughter the sheep. He reluctantly consented, and the sorrows of those two dumb creatures soon came to an end.

About the commonest, if not the simplest form of cruelty to poor pussy, is that of neglecting to feed her regularly, and at the proper times. Many people are guilty of this who would not willingly do an unkind action; they err through ignorance, or want of thought. Pussy, they imagine, can easily pick up all she needs about the floor. There could hardly be a greater mistake, or one more fatal to pussy's existence as a pet. For the mere fact of her having to look out for her own food will make her dishonest. Others starve their cats to make them catch mice; the very opposite is the case. It is your plump, well-fed, sleek grimalkins that are the best mousers; a starveling has not courage nor heart enough to kill a midge, let alone a mouse.

Higher in the scale of cruelty is the only

too common practice of leaving pussy at home to shift for herself, when the family moves to the seaside or country, in holiday season. In some instances the cat has access to and from the house, by some private door of her own. In this case, she will generally manage to eke out a miserable existence, from the scraps she picks up on the dung-hill; or she will become a thief, and make raids on the pigeon-houses or rabbit-boxes of the neighbours. At all events she is usually successful in sustaining her life, until the return of the family. But it is very different with pussy, when she is entirely imprisoned in an empty house, without either food or water, save perhaps an occasional mouse which chance may throw in her way.

I know of one unhappy cat that lived for three whole weeks, on dry oat-meal alone.

Another instance I can just recall to memory, and I am sorry to say, it is only one of many thousands that are happening every day. In this case, the family had gone to the country for a month, leaving Tabby—as

affectionate a little cat as ever lived, and the constant pet and playmate of the young children—shut up in the house. The building was a new one; there were consequently no mice; so, when the family at length returned, almost the first thing that met their gaze was poor Tabby, lying stark and stiff on the parlour hearth. She was a perfect skeleton, while the sardonic grin on her mouth showed how much she must have suffered. Such a death, in that lonely house, almost makes one's flesh creep to think of.

A still more shocking case of cruelty recently came to my knowledge, which shows very forcibly how dreadful must be the sufferings of a starving cat, and how great the sin of those who leave them thus to perish. In one of the principal squares of the city of Edinburgh lives Mrs. Blank, a lady who can carry a high head, in the best society of which the Scottish metropolis can boast. She subscribes to all the charities, and feeds and clothes the poor daily; of course she is only "lending to the Lord," and expects the principal returned on or after the Day of Judgment, with very

good interest. But that is neither here nor there. This lady had a cat, a very fine one too, on which she lavished an unusual amount of affection; and this affection was amply reciprocated, for pussy cared for no one in the house but her mistress. But in process of time, Jenny had the exceedingly bad taste to give birth to two pretty little kittens, and of course could not spare so much time as usual on her mistress's lap. So, when the family had packed up, and were about to move into the country for the holiday, this lady gave the order to have "that horrid tiresome old cat and kittens shut up in the house," until her return. Pussy was shut up accordingly. For a whole fortnight after, the people in the adjoining house were disturbed by melancholy cries, proceeding from the empty house, and, at last, unable to endure it any longer; the assistance of the police was called, and an entrance effected through a back window. A most horrible sight met their view. Poor pussy, thin even to emaciation, lay upon her bed in the corner, *nursing the heads of her two kittens.* She had eaten their bodies. Fancy

the sufferings that must have triumphed over her motherly love. Not only, however, had she eaten the kittens; but, rendered wild by the pangs of hunger, she had actually torn from her own thigh a large piece of flesh, and devoured it. It is a wonderful instance of the tenacity of life in cats, that this pussy, by careful nursing, made a good recovery. She took up house with her kind preservers, but never afterwards darkened the door of her cruel lady mistress. (*See Note N, Addenda*).

The sagacity of the cat is very often beautifully shown, in the means she takes to provide for herself food and shelter, in the absence of her owners. On these occasions pussy has often been known to become a "beggar from door to door." For example, One morning early, a workman,—Mr. D. Stoddart, 92, Rose Street, Edinburgh,—on going to his work, observed a large black cat, trotting on before him, with tail erect and evidently on the best of terms with herself. Her good-humour, however, must have been simulated for the occasion, for she was very hungry indeed. Presently, she

stopped and looking earnestly in the man's face, all her happiness seemed at once to forsake her and she mewed in a most pitiful manner. The good-hearted fellow at once opened his little napkin, and gave pussy part of his dinner. He was rather surprised next morning, to meet the puss exactly at the same time and place. In fact, the cat had adopted the working-man in a small way; and every morning regularly, for six months, it met him and gratefully received its breakfast. After this, it used to walk along with him for some distance, singing a little song to him the while, then took her departure. One day, however, pussy was missed, and it was a long time before anything else was heard of her. Some months after, in passing a gentleman's gate, in a different part of the town, who should come out to bid him welcome, but his quondam friend and companion the cat. She was sleek and fat, and apparently happy as the sunshine. On making inquiries, it afterwards transpired that during the six months that pussy used to meet the working-man, the family were on the Continent.

So common a thing has cruelty towards the feline race become, that one can hardly take a walk along the streets, or into the country, without seeing the mangled body of some poor puss, which has been stoned, beaten to death, or worried by dogs, more than likely in the open light of day. Indeed, a cat's foes are so very numerous, that the only wonder is, how she escapes with her life so often. Instead of nine lives, it would I think, be more convenient for her to have ninety and nine. Most common among pussy's numerous enemies may be mentioned,—

Firstly, Gamekeepers. It must certainly be very annoying to keepers, to have cats prowling indiscriminately among the preserves, destroying eggs, birds, rabbits, and game of every description; but, after all, the amount of injury done must be comparatively small; whereas the cruelties practised on pussy by these men are at times quite revolting. To kill a cat by shooting her, may under some circumstances be deemed justifiable; but to wilfully lay traps for its destruction, in which the poor thing may linger for days,

before death ends its misery, is surely far from humane. Even after pussy is relieved from the trap, it is, in most cases, only to have her brains dashed out against the nearest tree, or to have her tail cut off, and her body left to die on the ground.

Secondly, Street-boys. Seldom can a boy see a cat anywhere, on the street or at large, without lifting the nearest stone to shy at her. And not boys only, but even grown-up men, have I heard boasting of their vile exploits in cat-killing.

Thirdly, Men with dogs. "The only way I like to see a cat," said a gentleman to me the other day, "is with a dog at her heels;" and, I'm sorry to say, such sentiments are far from unfrequent. I know, indeed, it is an usual thing for young men to go out of an evening with dogs—generally bull-and-terriers—for the express purpose, of slipping them at the first cat that chance throws in their way. In these cases any hope of escaping with her life, is for the poor cat very small indeed, unless under very exceptional circumstances.

The other day, a friend of mine, who isn't very soft-hearted, was taking a walk in the suburbs of Manchester, with a bull-terrier dog and a bitch of the same breed—both champion prize-takers, by the way. A cat was started, and pussy made directly for the door of her master's house. Both the back and front doors were open. The cat darted in by the back, closely followed by the dog; while, as if to cut off all chance of escape, the bitch rushed round and entered by the front. The family were just at breakfast, when pussy sprang on the table, attacked simultaneously in front and rear by her canine foes. They literally *tore her in two* across the table, and before her owner's eyes. Of course the damage done to the crockery, was something very considerable, and my friend had to pay five guineas to hush the matter up; and "Serve you right," I remarked when he told me. (*See Note O, Addenda.*)

And *fourthly, Cat-skin Collectors.* In nearly every large town in the kingdom, there actually exist parties who make a living by buy-

ing cats for the sake of their hides. They of course have to pay a pretty large price for a good skin; and this in its turn gives rise to another branch of industry, namely, cat-hunting. The cat-hunter is lower in the social scale, and much more cruel and hardened, than even the bird-catcher. The occupation seems to be thoroughly demoralizing; and its followers live in the most squalid dens and infamous purlieus of the city, leading an idle, dissipated life; and, if not dead of disease before the age of twenty-five, it is because a grateful country has provided them with board and lodging free, at stony Portland or muddy Chatham.

Chance took me, not long since, to a beautiful rural district in one of the southern counties of Ireland. Paddy Taffy, as he was called, from, as he himself expressed it, his "mother being a Welshman, and his father Irish," was a farmer's lad, and used to bring me the most beautiful butter-milk, and the freshest of duck eggs every morning, as certain as sunrise. He was just the right boy in the right place; he knew every

rock, and bog, and corrie in the parish, besides all the most frequented rabbit hills, and the pools where the fish were never shy. He was always catering for fun for me, and was never so happy as when he had found me a new pleasure. Well, one day, Paddy Taffy comes to me with the eggs and butter-milk as usual; and, grinning like a grampus, "Augh! sir," says he, "but it's the raal bit of fun yer honour will be having this blessed morning, if you'll only be after coming to the river with Taffy."

"And I will that, Paddy," says I; for I had nothing better to do.

"I'll go home first though," says he, "and then meet you at the side of the strame."

A walk of two miles over the hills took me to the place of appointment. I forgot to say, that Paddy was never unaccompanied by two dogs, one a very decent well-bred water spaniel, the other a funny-looking frolicsome imp of a colley. On this day, when I met him, he had the dogs as usual, and moreover, what in all the world should he be carrying under his arm, but

a butter-tub. Before I had time to inquire the use of the singular utensil — singular under the circumstances,—

"It's meself," says Paddy, "that's glad you've come, and by the same token, yonder come the boys with the cat."

On looking round, sure enough, there were three more boys — of course "boys" is a mere figure of speech, they were all, including Paddy himself, grown-up men—with three more dogs, one of which, a large white-and-black Newfoundland, carried a basket in his teeth. Suspecting that some scene of mischief or cruelty was to be enacted, I asked Paddy to tell me, right straight away, what the game was to be. "Sure your honour," said he, "it's only this:—we put the cat in the tub, and float her down the strame, and send the dogs ahint her."

It was in vain that I tried to persuade Paddy to give up a scheme which seemed to me little short of diabolical; for I fully expected to see poor pussy torn limb from limb in the water. Paddy's reasoning was something after the following fashion:—

"If it's the dogs you're afraid of, sir, sure enough they'll deserve all they'll get, and more; if it's the cat, then you needn't be afraid at all, she's been three times at it before. Och! she's the raal taring blood-and-wounding captain of the butter-boat; besides, she has kittens at home, and that makes her the devil himself, sure. Moreover, sir,"—here he lowered his voice; "the boys is ugly boys, and they've ugly bits of timber below their flippers, and they wouldn't let us spoil the sport for the dear life itself."

So, making a virtue of necessity, I stopped to see the fun and fair play.

The river here was broad, and still, and deep. The basket was taken from the Newfoundland, and all the dogs were led out of sight behind an adjoining hillock. Then the cat—a wild-looking tortoise-shell—was taken out, placed in the tub, and the tub shoved well off into the stream. Away went puss with the current, whirling round and round in her awkward boat, and looking anything but happy, for she evidently knew

all about it. Then a shout from the boys; and down rushed the dogs helter-skelter, taking the water in grand style, the spaniel first, the Newfoundland following, springing right on top of the foremost dog, and sinking him by way of a lark. Up they all swam to the tub, which was still whirling slowly down stream; but puss was all ready, and stood by cleverly to repel boarders, evidently determined to sell her nine lives dearly. The spaniel was the first to place a paw on the tub; and his nose was at once laid open in consequence. The colley followed suit, and sung small immediately after. The other dogs had no better success; for each in his turn, and sometimes two at a time, were wounded, and had to haul off and lie too. *Tableaux:* four defeated curs, paddling harmlessly round the tub, barking futilely; puss erect and frizzly, with one paw impressively uplifted, growling defiance at the lot. All this time, the big Newfoundland had been swimming about, taking apparently no notice of the unequal contest. Now, however, he

seemed to think the state of affairs justified his interference, in order to uphold the prestige of the canine race. Poor dog, he at least had no intention of killing the cat; but only thought of hauling her, tub and all, safely in shore. With this kind intention, and in that thoroughly business-like manner only to be seen in dogs of his class, he paddled directly up to the vessel, and seizing it by the rim almost lifted it out of the water, as he put about with tail hard a-port to swim to land. Sharp and condign was the punishment Captain Puss administered to that dog's nose, for his unasked-for aid. Nelson dropped the tub like a red-hot shot; and with a howl of injured innocence, wheeled round and set out for land in disgust. But puss had no idea of letting him off like this; for the vessel, rather leaky at the best, had been filling for some time and was fast settling down; and pussy saw at a glance it must be abandoned. Then what better refuge, than to make a life-boat of that Newfoundland's head and shoulders? They just seemed cut out for it, so she

didn't think twice about it, but at once made the spring. If poor Nelson swam quick before, he now seemed to cleave the water like a new-born steam-boat. Pussy, however, had no intention of letting him land with her, being doubtful as to the consequences; accordingly, when only a few feet more of water had to be passed, with one good parting kick, she sprang nimbly to bank, and made off for the woods as fast as four legs could carry her. The dogs all looked very foolish; and presently, like true Paddies, they all fell foul of each other, and fought in the water and out of the water, to their heart's content. (*See Note P, Addenda.*) On the whole, I think pussy had the best of it.

CHAPTER VI.

PARLIAMENTARY PROTECTION FOR THE DOMESTIC CAT.

Now, after reading the chapter on cruelty to cats, surely every honest man and kind-hearted lady in the land will agree with me in thinking, that it is high time our Legislature should do something to put an end to the persecutions against, and to protect, our very useful pet pussy. Laws have been framed for the good of horses, dogs, and game; nay, even the very wild birds of the field have their friends in Parliament; but the poor cat is left out in the cold.

In the columns of a paper called *The Bazaar*, a few months ago, a correspondence was kept up for several weeks on the subject of "Cat Extermination." No doubt it is highly annoying to have one's beautiful flower-beds torn up, and one's pet pigeons and rabbits worried at night by prowling

cats. But the methods proposed for their destruction were in some cases diabolical. Poison of all sorts was to be freely used, and sponges dipped in tallow—worse torture than giving a shark a red-hot brick, or a lady's steel crinoline fastened up with hide—and wire fences, so constructed that the cat might find easy access into a garden, but no egress, and so be torn to pieces with dogs,

> "With mair o' horrible and awfu',
> Which e'en to name would be unlawfu'."

But I would fain enlist even these men on pussy's side; not certainly for sake of the cats, but for their own comfort; for no good—unless the gratification of a feeling of revenge—can accrue from attempts at extermination, and only from legislation can they hope to get redress. You may exterminate the Modoc Indians, extirpate the Maories, and annihilate the Ashantees, but you'll have no chance against the cats. Now, I should ask, nay, claim, parliamentary protection for our domestic cat, for many reasons. Here I shall only mention one or two. First then, because she is a *pet*—a pet in many a noble-

man's and gentleman's family, and still more so at many a poor man's fireside, who cannot afford to maintain any larger domestic animal; and because pussy is so *beautiful*, so *gentle*, *loving*, and *kind*, and capable of such high training; because she is so affectionate towards her owner; and because *she loves the children so.* She is, indeed, the pet *par excellence* of babyhood and infancy. Secondly, because we are Christians, or live in a Christian land; and because the cruelties that are practised every day in our midst, against this defenceless creature are harrowing to all our feelings, and a disgrace to a civilized country.

Thirdly, and lastly *at present*, because the cat is an animal of great utility.

Putting aside, then, all sentimentality, let us look at the matter in a plain business point of view.

We ought to do all in our power for the protection and improvement, of every domesticated animal under our care, whether kept for use or ornament; no one will think of denying that. But, there is no creature

under the sun which is so systematically ill-used, and carelessly treated as pussy. The cause is easily understood: we do not thoroughly appreciate the good the cat does, and, even if we do, being all naturally selfish, we like to have and hold all we can, for the least possible outlay and trouble. Thus, pussy's services are poorly repaid and ungratefully received, because she is so patient and uncomplaining. If horses or other cattle were treated in like manner, they would quickly deteriorate in value; but the cat, looked upon as a mere vermin-killer, is different, her presence alone, however skinny and lean, being generally enough to frighten away those pests, rats and mice. Indeed, very few of us, I fear, fully appreciate the amount of real good done, or the large amount of valuable property saved annually —in a preventive way alone—by cats. More quickly than almost any other animal, do rats and mice multiply. Take the field-mouse for example (the *mus leacopus* or the *mus sylvaticus*), with the nests of which nearly every school-boy is familiar,—

"Those wee bit heaps o' straw and stubble,
That cost them many a weary nibble."

These creatures breed at least four or five times a year; and you seldom find fewer than seven little baby-mice in each nest. The mischief these creatures sometimes work in grass fields, and in fields of newly-sown grain, is almost incalculable. Whole acres have been known to be destroyed in a single night. Cats are the greatest enemies these creatures have: they destroy them young and old, by the dozen, for mere sport—they seldom care to eat them.

In-doors, again, what would the baker, the miller, the draper, the grocer, or even the bookseller do, without his cat?

There is no prettier ornament, I think, a shop-window can have, than an honest-looking sleek Tom tabby.

"Yes, sir," a hosier said to me the other day; "I do like my cat. I shan't tell you, because you could not be expected to believe it, not being a business man, how much money I lost two years ago in one winter, by rats alone. I tried everything, traps and

poison, in vain, and was forced to fall back on pussy after all."

A Scotch miller, plagued with rats, and hearing that music would frighten them away, hired a couple of Highland bag-pipers to play in the mill for two whole nights. (*See Note Q, Addenda.*)

"Of course," he said, "the lads and lasses gathered from every corner, and it cost me oceans o' whisky; but those rats kent good music, I verily believe they danced to it. So, failing that, I got twa kittens; and three weeks after, I hadn't a rat about the place."

But looking at the matter statistically: it is the very lowest average to say that every cat in this country does away with twenty mice or rats per annum; and, also, on the lowest average, each mouse or rat will destroy one pound's worth of property a year. Well, there are, in the British Islands, over 4,000,000 cats; that, multiplied by 20, gives an annual saving of £80,000,000 worth of property; and those cats do not take £4,000,000 to keep them alive, not more—at any rate.

Surely, then, so useful a friend to man ought to be protected by law. Until, however, the Legislature deems it fit to do something for her, I think it behoves the public in general, and owners of pets and cat-fanciers in particular, to do everything they can to check cruelty to cats, and try to make her life a more comfortable and endurable one. Pussy is very easily kept, and I would, in the name of common humanity, earnestly beseech my readers to try the effect of kindness and regular feeding on the cats they may own, and see how soon it will amply repay them.

Cat shows ought to receive more encouragement than they do at present. Nothing can be better calculated both to foster a love for these beautiful creatures, and increase and perfect the different breeds, than those interesting exhibitions. At present, only a very few of our leading aristocracy, and gentry patronize cat shows. But they are every day becoming more and more popular. Birmingham has emulated the Crystal Palace, and Edinburgh rivals both; and, before very long,

I hope to see every town, in the United Kingdom holding its annual show of cats.

Now, every one I have spoken to on the subject, admits that something ought to be done, by the Legislature, for the protection of the domestic cat. The difficulty seems to be where to begin, and *what sort* of laws to frame. Begin, I say, by putting "a stout heart to a stay brae" (stiff hill), and we are sure to do some good.

The following hints are merely meant to be suggestive, and by no means of a *ne plus ultra* character. Indeed, *I should feel much obliged to my readers, if they would kindly forward to me, their views on this subject.*

The law for the destruction of worthless dogs, found straying and begging in the streets, although at first blush it appeared a cruel one, was really both humane and kind to the whole canine race. There were too many useless curs without owners; and there are also Arab cats as well as Arab dogs—thousands on thousands, who never had a home and never will, preferring a nomadic life, because they never knew a better. How

can we get rid of this surplus feline population? I would introduce a *cat licence*. This licence, of course, should cost a mere nominal sum, what indeed even the poorest man who was able to afford food for a cat, could easily pay. The licences should be of two kinds, namely:—one for mere utility cats, and the other for valuable cats, household pets, etc. The first to cost one shilling and threepence, the other two shillings. A cat's collar to be presented to the owner on payment of the fee; the collar stamped and numbered. The shilling licence collar to be dark; the other of coloured material. In the event of a cat being wantonly killed, a fine to be inflicted, of not more than £5 for the first class, and £10 for the second class of licence. This would have a salutary effect in checking the present trade of cat-skin hunting.

A place would be required in every town, or district, where all cats found straying without a collar could be taken, and if not claimed within three or four days, to be either sold, given away, or destroyed. Cats

found doing damage to gardens, poultry, rabbit warrens, or pigeon lofts, to be captured if possible, and the owners made to pay damages. All cases of cruelty to cats to be punished by fines, etc.

Starving cats to be penal. I should have an inspector to visit every house once or twice a year, and see that the cats were in good condition. The revenue from this tax would be over £200,000 a year. I recommend it to the attention of Mr. Lowe.

These are only a few crude suggestions, which may be very much improved upon; one thing at least is certain, *the law ought to protect the domestic cat.*

CHAPTER VII.

FELINE AILMENTS.

Of course, in one chapter—and that is all my available space—it will be impossible to notice all, or even the greater part, of the evils that feline flesh is heir to. I will endeavour, however, to lay down a few simple rules for those who wish to keep their cats in health, and for their treatment in the most common diseases.

Prevention is better than cure. I believe that is not an original remark; but it is nevertheless a very true one, as regards the ailments of the domestic cat, almost all of which may be kept at bay by even ordinary attention. We all have a duty to perform to the animals under us, even to animals of mere utility; and much more cheerfully ought that duty to be performed, if the creature is kept for the beauty that pleases our eye, or for the love it loves us with. So

long as your pet is in health, and happy and lively, you can easily forgive yourself for many little acts of neglect towards her; but when she falls ill, when she is writhing in pain, and looking in your face with eyes that implore your aid, then, indeed, I do not envy your feelings, if, coupled with your sorrow for her sufferings, you have the sad reflection that, many a time, you might have been better to her.

There is more room for improvement, in the breed and condition of the domestic cat, than in that of any other animal I know; and no creature so soon repays its master, for the care and attention he may bestow on it. Instead of the meagre-looking, small, short-haired, guilty thief, that used to fly and get up the chimney whenever it heard your footstep, you have a large, honest, plump pussy, with glossy fur and loving eye, that runs to meet you with a song, and jumps on your shoulder to have the pleasure of *giving* you the first caress—a thing of joy and beauty for——, well, for a matter of fifteen years at least. And these are the

sort of cats I wish to see throughout the length and breadth of the land. I like to see people fond of their cats. Some will tell you it is unmanly to love a cat. Fudge! Man's manliness consists in doing, in a straightforward manner, whatsoever is natural and right, and not fearing the face of clay in the doing of it.

"But," said I, the other day at Birmingham, somewhat mischievously interrupting a sporting friend of mine, who was indulging in a long diatribe on the comparative merits of two bull-terriers, "But, have you seen the cats?"

"Confound the cats!" he answered testily, and, after a pause, "D'ye know what I should like to do? Look, see. There are a hundred and twenty fox-terriers yonder; well, I'd just turn them into the cat show and close the doors."

"Well, at all events," said I, "come and see them." Arrived in the building, my friend walked along the rows of cages, peeping into each with an air of amusing perplexity. At last he stopped before a beautiful Persian, and,—

"D—n it all," said he—his language was not very choice—"these aren't cats, Doctor—they are some foreign beasts."

"Foreign only to bad treatment," I said.

The upshot of it was, that I had to buy him a kitten—one of great promise. He took it away in his pocket.

"I'll be good to it," he said; "and when it's big, if it's game and all that, I'll—look, see—I'll give it *a dozen rats every Sunday morning*, hang me if I don't."

He is a rough nut, my friend; but good at the kernel.

In order, then, to keep pussy in perfect health, pelage, and temper, and worthy of taking her place before the parlour fire, or on the drawing-room couch, we must attend to three things, viz., her *food*, her *drink*, and her *housing*.

Food.—I have no doubt that cats were originally admitted to the society of mankind, on account of their proclivities for killing rats and mice. We can have some clue to the seeming mystery of the veneration, in which cats were held in ancient Egypt, if we

remember the large stores of grain, etc., which its inhabitants were in the habit of laying up. No country in the world depended more, for its very existence as a nation, on its cereals than did Egypt. We can imagine, then, a time when cats were unknown even to the Egyptians, and a particular year, when the crops had nearly failed, when the grain was hoarded carefully, and when, with famine, came a plague of rats and mice, threatening death and annihilation to all in the land. We may easily fancy, the reign of terror and gloom that would ensue; and then we can understand the exuberance of joy, and general rejoicing on the introduction, by some Magi from a far country, of their new-found friend the cat. *A nation saved by cats!* Something of the kind must undoubtedly have occurred; and thus the stringent laws framed for pussy's protection, and the love and regard, lavished on her by all classes of the people, may more easily be accounted for. We ourselves have always had cats, since the conquest by the Romans, and can neither fully appreciate

their value nor use; but think, reader, just for a moment, what the consequences would be, and how great the destruction of property by vermin, were cats to be suddenly exterminated. If then, only for the sake of making pussy more valuable as a vermin-killer, she ought to have regular and sufficient food. A cat ought to be fed at least twice a day. Let her have a dish to herself, put down to her, and removed when the meal is finished. Experience is the best teacher as regards the quantity of a cat's food, and in quality let it be varied. Oatmeal porridge and milk, or white bread steeped in warm milk, to which a little sugar has been added, are both excellent breakfasts for puss; and for dinner she must have an allowance of flesh. Boiled lights are better for her than horse-meat, and occasionally let her have fish. Teach your cat to wait patiently till she is served—a spoiled cat is nearly as disagreeable as a spoiled child. If you want to have your cat nice and clean, treat her now and then to a square inch of fresh butter. It not only acts as a gentle laxative, but, the grease, com-

bining in her mouth with the alkalinity of her saliva, forms a kind of natural cat-soap, and you will see she will immediately commence washing herself, and become beautifully clean. (N.B.—If you wish to have a cat nicely done up for showing, touch her all over with a sponge dipped in fresh cream, when she licks herself the effect is wonderful.)

Remember that too much flesh-meat, especially liver,—which ought only to be given occasionally,—is very apt to induce a troublesome diarrhœa (looseness). Do not give your pet too many tit-bits at table; but whatever else you give her, never neglect to let her have her *two regular meals.*

Never give a cat food in an *unwashed dish.*

Drink. It will save you a great deal of trouble, if you have a proper dish for pussy's drink; and let it stand constantly in the same corner of the room. It must be a double dish, that is, two saucers joined together, one for *water* and the other for *milk;* and remember, it must be carefully cleaned every morning, for a highly-bred cat

will not drink milk, if it is the least unsavoury, nor water unless it is pure and free from dust. It perhaps is not very generally known, that cats nearly always prefer pure water to milk, when they are really thirsty.

A great treat for pussy, when she is a little bit seedy—of a morning, perhaps, after having been on the spree all night, and the the best of cats will go on the spree occasionally—is a saucer of nice creamy milk, made warm with water, and slightly sweetened with sugar. It sets her all to rights straight away, and you will not find her ungrateful for such kindness.

Housing. It is not at all an uncommon practice, in some parts of the country, for people to turn their cats out at night, before they themselves retire to rest. They do so, they will tell you, to prevent pussy from misbehaving in the house. Now such a practice cannot be too severely condemned. First and foremost, no well-trained cat, unless under the most extreme circumstances, such as sudden illness, etc., will make any filth in the house where she resides; for, as I have said before,

there is no animal in the world more cleanly in its habits than the domestic cat. Secondly, the practice of turning pussy out of doors at night, is the very thing to engender filthy habits in her during the day. And lastly, people who treat their cats in this manner, are accountable, for all the weight of crime, that falls upon pussy's shoulders. Badly-housed cats become vagrants and thieves, poor, starved-looking, beggarly brutes, and adepts at all mischief, besides being unhealthy, ugly, and filled with fleas. These are the cats that plunder pigeon lofts, steal chickens, tear up beautiful flower-beds, and murder valuable rabbits in cold blood. They—

> "Sleep all day, and wake all night,
> And keep the country round in fright."

A cat that has been well fed and cared for by day, will seldom want to go out at night. If she does not feel sleepy, she will betake herself to the cellar, and have a little innocent flirtation with the mice or rats, or kill cock-roaches when everything else fails her.

Make your pussy's bed on a couch or on the parlour sofa, or let her make it herself. *Apropos* of making beds: the other night I was lying on the sofa, prior to turning into bed—I had lowered the gas and admitted the moonlight—when Muffie entered, apparently in a great hurry to go to sleep. Seeing her master lying there, she placed her two forepaws on the sofa, and looking in my face,—

"Will you kindly get up out of that and let me lie down," she said, speaking with her eyes.

"Not till I'm ready; I'll see you hanged first," replied I, speaking with mine.

"Very well, then," said pussy; and she went straight to the table, jumped up and pulled off the cloth, deliberately rolled herself in it, and went to sleep. She pulled down the ink along with it, and soiled the carpet, but that was a matter for me and my landlady to settle between us; puss did not care a rat.

Never turn your cat out at night unless she asks to go.

Never shut her up in a room all night, but let her have free access to kitchen or attic; you will thus have a healthy, cleanly puss, and never be troubled with mice.

The simplest form of medicine for a cat, and one which either in town or country they should never want, is *grass*. It is an excellent anti-scorbutic, keeps pussy's blood pure, and acts always as a gentle laxative, and at times as an emetic, according to the quantity taken, and of this pussy herself is the best judge. In the country, a cat can always find grass for herself, but in the town it ought to be given to her. People who are cat-fanciers, should never take a walk into the country, without culling a bunch of nice fresh grass for pussy. When you go home, the best place to keep it will be the cellar, or lumber-room, to which pussy has access, held fast by the ends between two flat stones or bricks, a bit of wetted flannel being placed beneath the upper stone to keep the grass fresh; and the cat will soon know where to go when she finds the need for it.

Although good and regular food, with proper attention, will generally succeed in keeping your cats healthy, still these animals have many troubles which call for medical aid. I give a very few of the commonest, with the treatment appropriate for each.

Diarrhœa. This, for obvious reasons, is a very troublesome complaint in a cat. It is generally induced by irregular feeding, or exposure to wet and cold. Fat meat will also bring it on, or too much liver. It very soon reduces the creature to a mere skeleton, and if not attended to, will end in dysentery and death. Begin the treatment by giving the little patient half a small teaspoonful of castor-oil. Give a still smaller dose about six hours after, to which two drops of laudanum or solution of muriate of morphiæ has been added. Afterwards give, three times a day, either a little chalk mixture, with half a drop of laudanum in each dose, or a teaspoonful of the following mixture :—

℞.	Vin. Ipecac.	ʒ j.
	Tinct. Kino	ʒ iij.
	Decoct. Hæmatox . . .	℥ iv.

Give no flesh diet; you may give the cat fish, however, in small quantities, and arrowroot with bread and milk. A few drops of solution of lime may be added to each diet with advantage.

In diarrhœa, and in all cases of severe illness, the cat should be turned into an empty room, with a little fire, a warm bed and a box of earth or sand.

To give a cat medicine. Roll her all but the head in a sheet, and get some one to hold her. Do not alarm her if possible—mind your fingers—and pour the medicine little by little down her throat. If a pill or bolus, dip it in oil, and put it well down and against *the roof of her mouth.*

Chronic inflammation of the stomach. This is a frequent disease among cats. It often follows the administration of poison—supposing the cat to have escaped immediate death. She refuses nearly all food, has frequent attacks of vomiting, gets thin and altogether unhealthy-looking, without any apparent cause. In these cases, I generally recommend the trisnitrate of bismuth, about

a grain, to be placed on the tongue twice a day. Occasional doses of castor-oil or tincture of rhubarb, with milk diet and fish, and, if there be much wasting, raw beef may be given twice a day.

Bronchitis.—Cats are very subject to this complaint, as they are very liable to catch cold, especially if much exposed. It begins with the symptoms of a common cold, such as staring coat, shivering, and slight cough. Then the cat becomes very ill, for a day or two, with the acute stage of the trouble, which, however, soon passes into the chronic form. There is now apparent difficulty of breathing, the cat is constantly coughing, with the tongue hanging over the lower lip; she has an anxious expression about her face, and the eyes water and are mattery. She gets rapidly thinner, and moons about, refusing all food, or at times eating voraciously, and with depraved appetite.

Treatment. Begin by giving a simple dose of castor-oil, if no diarrhœa present; if so, the dose to be combined with two drops of laudanum. Confine her to the house and

feed her on beef-tea and bread, or milk-arrowroot with beef-tea. If the disease becomes chronic, I know of no medicine better than—

Extr. Conii
Pil. Scillæ Co. ā ā . . . . gr. xv.

made into a bolus with sufficient bread-crumb; the bolus to be divided into twenty pills, and one given every night. Keep up her strength, and complete the cure by a small tea-spoonful of cod-liver-oil twice a day for a fortnight. This latter often acts like a charm. A certain form of "mange" often accompanies the disease.

Consumption. This is not necessarily, although often, a lung-disease in cats. Whatever disease induces general wasting of the body, deterioration of pelage, an unhealthy state of the system, with refusal of, or distaste for, food—if there be no bilious vomiting—may be called consumption. *The treatment*, which in most cases is successful, is regulation of diet, careful housing and attention, raw meat in small quantities twice a day, and cod-liver-oil twice or thrice a day.

Cod-liver-oil must be the sheet anchor in these cases; but if there is much cough, a little mixture like the following will not fail to give relief,—

℞. Tinct. Opii Camph.	ʒj.
Syr. Scillæ	ʒ jss.
Sol. Mur. Morphiæ	m. x.
Aquæ cum Syrupo	ad. ʒ ij.—M.

A teaspoonful occasionally.

Fits. Cats are subject to various sorts of fits, delirious and otherwise. The great thing is to give instant relief. Try first a common smelling-salts bottle held to the nostrils, or a pinch of dry snuff; if that does no good, pussy must be bled. I make a minute incision on the lower part of the ear behind, with a fine-pointed lancet, and then foment with a sponge and hot water.

The after-treatment will depend much on the condition of the cat. If too fat or heavy, the diet must be lowered and regulated,—sheep's liver and melt being given three times a week; if she is thin and emaciated, we must trust to plenty of milk and raw meat, with cod-liver oil, with one-tenth of a grain of quinine, twice a day.

If the cat be subject to fits the following will be found useful :—

℞. Bromid. Potass.	gr. x.
Iod. Potass.	gr. ijss.
Zinci. Sulph.	gr. iv.

Mix with bread-crumb to form twenty pills, and give one morning and night.

Mange. I merely use this term because it is a handy one. Cats never have mange as found in the dog; but they have many kinds of skin diseases, both pustular and scaly. They may all be treated in a similar manner. Attention to diet: let it be nourishing, moderate in quantity, and not heating. Let the cat have plenty of exercise and free access to grass. A lotion of carbolic acid may be used with advantage, not stronger than one part of the acid to seventy of water. It must be *very* carefully mixed, and washed off again in two or three hours. Afterwards, an ointment of sulphur and hellebore may be used,—which any chemist will make for you,—and arsenic must be given internally. The *liquor arsenicalis* is the medicine to be used: drop six drops into an ounce bottle of water, and

give pussy one teaspoonful twice a day in her milk. There is no taste with the medicine. Continue this for a fortnight, then omit for three days, and resume again until a cure is effected and the hair begins to grow again.

The Yellows. This disease is often as fatal in the dog as in the cat. It is caused by derangement of the liver, and is most common in large overfed cats, which get little exercise. The disease is ushered in by general feverishness, loss of appetite, and shivering. Sickness next comes on, accompanied by vomiting of a bright yellow, or dark green fluid, mixed with froth. The vomiting continues, and is at times very distressing; and diarrhœa and dysentery may supervene and cause death. If taken in time, give her about half a small tea-spoonful of glauber salts, well diluted with water. This, even if it should cause vomiting, will thereby do good by clearing the stomach; besides, the shock may tend to check the fever. If the vomiting continues, try a pinch of white bismuth, placed on the tongue, or from one

to three drops of laurel-leaf water; or, take one drop of creasote, a few grains of aromatic powder, and sufficient fresh bread-crumb to form ten pills; and give one three times a day. Give, for four or five nights half a grain of calomel on the tongue; and if much diarrhœa is present, give her a grain of white bismuth three times a day, with one or two drops of laudanum at night; and complete the cure by infinitesimal doses of quinine, with cod-liver-oil and raw meat, if there be much emaciation.

Dysentery. This is a very serious complaint, and nearly always fatal. It is best treated by castor-oil to begin with; afterwards, minute doses of opium and ipecacuanha, with generous diet and occasionally a little port wine.

Milk Fever. On no account should a cat's kittens be taken from her all at once. Indeed, one should always be left to be reared. In milk-fever the paps are swollen and painful, the secretion of milk is suppressed, and the cat is either highly excited—sometimes attempting to kill her kittens—or dull and

stupid-like. A little bleeding will give relief if there is delirium. The tits are to be well fomented with warm water, and a little wine given occasionally, with cream. Three or four drops of compound tincture of camphor, twice a day, will tend to allay irritability.

Inflammation of one or both eyes is not uncommon among cats, either through injury, or from cold. *Remedy:* A lotion of sulphate of zinc, two grains to an ounce of water, or a few grains of common alum in warm water, as a fomentation, will generally effect a cure.

For *ulcers* and *sores* of external ears or cheeks, touch them occasionally with bluestone, and apply—

℞ Sulph. Zinci	gr. x.
Tinct. Lavandula.	ʒ j.
Aquæ	ʒ iv.

If they are very inveterate, they will only yield to red precipitate ointment, and arsenic internally, as for mange.

Cats stand operations of all sorts well. If a cat's leg is broken and lacerated by a trap, cut it off. Don't be afraid. Only leave sufficient flesh to cover the bone, and have ready

a strong red-hot wire, to cauterize and stop bleeding, then bring the flaps together by a needle and thread.

Many cats die of apoplexy, many of paralysis. I have dissected some who had well-marked softening of the brain. And many die in their sleep. As a general rule, if your cat seems ailing, you can't do wrong to give her an emetic—try a little weak salt and water; or let her have fresh grass, and either a dose of castor-oil, or a very little grey powder.

I have often seen cats' lives saved, by giving raw beef and cod-liver oil.

When a cat is in bad health, either her stomach, bowels, liver, or kidneys, are out of order; and as a rule we can generally only conjecture which. A medicine, therefore, that acts, gently but effectively, on all the organs would be a sort of specific for cats' complaints. In the "Cat's Medicine Chest," advertised at the end of this book, I have placed a medicament of this nature, which I have often prescribed with excellent results. There is everything in that little box to make a Pussy well, and keep her happy.

CHAPTER VIII.

ODDS AND ENDS.

When my pet cat read the heading of this chapter, she sarcastically remarked,—

"Humph! I suppose you mean that cats tails are the 'ends'; but what's the 'odds'?"

Theodore Nero raised his chin slightly from the carpet to add,—

"So long 's you're happy."

"You brute!" said Muffie. "You don't know what you're talking about; you always are half asleep."

But touching cats' tails (it wouldn't be the best policy to touch every cat's tail however), a lady asked me seriously at dinner the other day, "Why does a cat waggle its tail?" Such a question at such a time was a poser, and, to comfort me, she added, that she really was asking for information. I answered, as Dundreary, "Becauth a cat ith

sthronger than its tail; if the tail wath the sthronger, the tail would waggle the cat."

Cats are extremely proud of their tails. Pulling a Jew's beard, and a cat's tail, are indignities of an equality. Doubtless, did mankind possess these appendages, he would be equally jealous of their honour. But they have been overlooked somehow in the outfitting. But just imagine how gingerly we gentlemen would use them! How elegantly we would carry them under our arms while walking, and how we would flare up if any one trod on our tail! Imagine Paddy at a fair: "Twelve o'clock, and no foight yet! Will any gintleman just spit on the point of my tail?"

How useful, too, tails would be in many ways in riding, driving, or boating! On a rainy day, one's umbrella might be tied to it, so as to have both hands free; and in mobs and crowds it could be worn out of sight. How handy, to dig your neighbour in the ribs with, and say, "Sly dog"; or, "Don't you see, don't you see?" when you'd made a bad pun! How useful to the orator, for

elegant gesticulation, to give point to an argument, or to indicate derision. For example:—

Lord Chief Justice: Did you poke your tail at me, sir?

Claimant: No, my lord; I——

L. C. J.: Very well, sir; don't do it again—that's all.

How convenient the British sailor would find a tail, when aloft reefing topsails; and, sure, wouldn't Jack also use it as a tobacco stopper? If men had tails, the medical profession would be benefited thereby. There would be several new diseases and new operations. How beautifully this would sound, for instance: "Compound comminuted fracture of the middle third of caudal extremity;" or, "Amputation at the tenth caudal vertebra;" which would give rise to advertisements like the following: "Turner's Circular Splint," and "Beautiful, easy-fitting Caudal Appendages, equal to Nature; patronised by the illustrious Duke of Dunmore, whose tail was carried away by a 500 pounder, at the battle of Dorking, during

the famous charge of the gallant London Scottish. Only *seven-and-six*!"

The ends of justice, too, would be assisted. New laws would be added to the penal code. Garotters would be condemned to "Two years' imprisonment and deprivation of caudicity." Lesser offences punished by "Six months, and six inches off tail." Thus we should easily know a rogue in the street, when we met one.

I must stop. I feel I should warm to the subject; and one of such vast ramifications ought to have more space for its consideration, than I can afford. However, to bandmasters, acrobats, public-speakers, parsons, painters, and policemen, tails would indeed be invaluable; and, upon my honour, when I come to think of it, I only wonder how human beings, have come to be overlooked in this little matter.

Cats, it may be observed, wag their tails when pleased; when angry, they lash them; and, when excited, and about to spring on their prey, the tail quivers. This is all involuntary on the part of pussy, and is an

index of the state of her feelings, the tail being principally supplied with nerves from the spinal chord, and along this chord the nervous force is carried from the brain.

Why do cats always fall on their feet? This question is by no means difficult to answer. When she first falls from a height, her back is lowermost, and she is bent in a semicircle. If she fell thus, fracture of the spine, and death, would be the inevitable result. But natural instinct induces her, after she has fallen a foot or two, to suddenly extend the muscles of her back, and stretch her legs; the belly now becomes the convexity, and the back concave, thus altering the centre of gravity, and bringing her round; then she has only to hold herself in this position in order to alight on her feet.

One day lately, a lady, who lives in the *fourth* story of a house in Dundee, hung the cage with the canary on a nail outside the window. The cat, from the inside, watched it for some time till, unable any longer to withstand the temptation, she made a spring, and, somehow missing the cage, fell to the

ground, some forty feet. But she alighted on her feet, and walked off as if nothing had occurred. (*See Note R, Addenda.*)

Cats are wonderfully sure footed. I saw a cat one day, taking an airing along a housetop, where Blondin could hardly have walked without a pole. She had a kitten in her mouth, too, to make her performance all the more entertaining. Another puss I saw sitting on an iron rail, a few feet from the ground, and apparently fast asleep. The rail was only about one inch in diameter, and she sat there fully an hour.

Very few cats care to drink spirituous liquors. Dogs are not so particular. One dog I had once, on board ship—a Labrador retriever—used to attend the call of "Grog O!" every day, and get his allowance along with the men. He never got drunk though, and he showed his wisdom by taking it well watered. I know a little bull-terrier bitch, who goes to a hotel every day she has a chance. Her favourite tipple is beer poured

upon a salver. As she cannot speak, she sits in a chair and thinks a lot. As she always meets plenty of friends willing to stand treat, she never comes home sober. I saw her a few weeks ago, trying in vain to cross the street. At last she sat down in the middle, and barked to me. I was sorry to see a well-bred young lady in such a condition, so I helped her home, for which she showed gratitude next day. (*See Note S, Addenda.*)

But my father had a cat,—a big Tom, whom the servants used to make drunk at any time. His beverage was Scotch whiskey-brose, *i.e.*, oatmeal and whiskey; and I've seen him come staggering into the parlour and tumble over the leg of the table. Then he would fall asleep.

Cats, as a rule, do not like music; although, if brought up in a musical family, they learn to tolerate it. A cat is easily taught to come when whistled upon. A friend of mine has a cat, who, if he commences to whistle a tune, immediately jumps

on his breast, and rubs her head all over his face, as if trying to comfort him, having the notion, no doubt, that he is in some sort of anguish. But if he puts out his hand to take down his fiddle in her presence, she at once erects her back and tail, and growls at him, in unmistakable anger. However, in this she shows her good taste, for her master is certainly the most execrable performer, that ever tickled hair on gut.

There are many old superstitions regarding cats still extant, and many foolish notions about them, that had much better be unlearned. Sailors believe, that, if the ship's cat be lost overboard, shipwreck, or some such disaster, is almost sure to follow. My own old captain, Commander McH—— was imbued with this notion, hence his extreme care to retain the black cat on board, as depicted in the tale, which follows this Chapter—"The Skipper's Imp."

Witches are supposed by some to be constantly attended by an evil spirit, in the shape of a black cat.

To dream of cats is considered very unlucky. In some of the more unfrequented districts of Scotland, the good folks are still very careful to shut up their cats in the house, on Hallowe'en, *i.e.*, the 31st of October. And they tell me, that those cats that have managed to escape incarceration, that night may be seen, by those brave enough to look, scampering over hill and dell, and across the lonely moors, each one ridden by a brownie, a bogle, a spunkie, or some other infernal jockey, in fact, a devil's own steeplechase. And, they say, those cats never produce young again; or, if they do, the sooner the kittens are put out of sight the better; they are subject to startings in their sleep—no wonder—have a weird unearthly look about their eyes, and soon pine away, and die, and go—we shudder to say whither.

Cats are supposed to be capital prognosticators of the weather. If a cat is seen washing her face with more than usual assiduity, it is going to be stormy; and if pussy sits much with her back to the fire, you may

expect frost and snow in winter, and thunder and lightning, with hail, in summer. Some portion of pussy's person seems, indeed, to retain the power of foretelling the weather, even after death, as witness that common toy, which poor people use instead of a barometer, a wee wee man, and a wee wee woman, living together in a wee wee house; one of them pops out every day; if the day is to be fine, the lady comes, if not, like a loving wife, she sends her good man out—the secret is, the little couple are suspended on catgut, which twists or untwists according to the state of the atmosphere.

There is a very common popular fallacy, regarding cats sucking an infant's breath, and killing it. The idea is simply preposterous. Cats, being extremely fond of children, naturally like to get into the cradle, to lie beside, and watch them. They often crouch upon the child's breast; this may impede breathing more or less, according to the relative size of the cat to the baby. If the cat actually sits upon the child's face, then indeed the poor creature may be suffo-

LONG-HAIRED BLACK.

First Prize—Owned by Miss Armitage.

MANX.

First Prize—Owned by P. Williams, Esq.

cated. But such an occurrence is so very rare, that it is hardly worth mentioning. Many more deaths occur from bad arrangement of a baby's pillow, in which case the mother must be glad when there is a cat to put the blame upon.

Cats have any amount of wiliness about them. A dog would scarcely think of hiding below a bush until its prey came within reach; but cats are adepts at an ambuscade. A cat knows by experience that a bird—say a sparrow—looks almost in every direction, saving directly beneath it, and so pussy always steals a march on it, from below. If a bird is foolish enough to alight on the top of a clothes-pole, pussy has a very easy victory. It is that same habit of never looking downwards, which causes those large birds, which alight on a ship's yards at sea, to be so easily captured by the sailors.

Instances of jealousy are by no means uncommon in the feline race. Jealousy is an indication of a sensitive nature, and no

animal in the world is more sensitive than a cat. A lady had a pretty little pussy, which she had saved from drowning. This cat was excessively fond of its mistress, was never absent from her while in the house, and outside used to follow her like a dog. But in course of time, this lady bought a parrot, and pussy must have thought her mistress was paying the bird too much attention, for all of a sudden the cat's nature seemed entirely changed. It did not respond to the lady's caresses; it would sit for an hour at the time, looking with gathered brows at the parrot, and instead of accompanying her mistress abroad she remained sulking in doors. In truth, the cat was breaking her heart; her glossy fur got dry and rough, and at last she refused all food; so, as she really loved her cat, this lady parted with her parrot, although with great reluctance. Pussy recovered at once; the effect seemed magical; and in a few days she was herself again, the same fun-loving, frolicsome, loving wee cat she had been before.

A gentleman had a cat whom he called "Pimento"—the pimento-tree, the reader will remember, is said to permit no rival plant to grow within its shade. There was another cat in the same house; but Pimento, although otherwise a nice cat, and gentle and loving in the extreme, would never allow his master to pay the slightest attention to this cat. If he did, there was a row at once; and if his master protected the other cat, then Pimento at once left the room growling, and in high dudgeon. (*See Note T, Addenda.*)

"In a house where I resided," says a correspondent (*see Note U, Addenda*), "there were two cats, a young and an old one. The young one was a smart clever animal with a decided turn for humour, the other liked to be taken notice of. One day I was paying some attention to the latter, which, of course, was highly pleased. With tail erect, it walked backward and forward. The young one, which had been pretending to be asleep, suddenly seized hold of the tail of the other with its paw, gave it a sharp pull, and was again in a sleeping attitude ere the

other had time to look round. The old one turned about, saw the young one apparently asleep, and me laughing. It immediately retired to a corner of the room, thinking no doubt that I was a double villain."

Did the reader ever observe how very fond cats are of sitting on paper. One can hardly have a pet puss, and not observe this trait. If you have a book in your lap, up jumps Pussy, and seats herself right on top of it. If you are writing a letter, Pussy creeps along the table, singing so that you can hardly be angry with her, and places herself on the writing materials. My present puss prefers the *Daily Telegraph* to anything else for a bed at night, or to have her kittens on; indeed, if the *Standard* is lying on the same sofa, and she gets on to it by mistake, she will very soon get off, and on to the *Telegraph*.

Are cats revengeful? Never as a rule. Yet they do sometimes display little pettish outbursts of temper. They would not be like women if they did not do that.

A lady tells me that when she is writing, her cat will sometimes come and plant herself right in the way, and when gently pushed off, she suddenly loses her temper, and pitches the writing materials right and left on to the floor.

The following anecdote is highly illustrative of the kind and quantity of pussy's revenge:—

"Now for the story of the cat; she was a lovely black and white Kâbul cat (the same as Persian) with hair like floss silk, as long as one's finger; and as wise—as a great many human beings. She had a great dislike to roast mutton cold, and when I had nothing else to offer her, her resentment was most marked: she refused my caresses, and walked straight off to my dressing-room, where on the top of the chest of drawers stood my bonnet-box. She jumped up and administered slaps to the box, until it fell on the floor, when she would come away at once, her revenge being gratified. This occurred on several occasions, and only when she was offered a cold mutton dinner. Was

not the knowledge of what would distress my feminine feelings a wonderful piece of intelligence? We quite looked out for it after the first few times, and would watch her walking off to my room, and then in a minute or two there would be 'bump, bump,' and my husband would say, 'There goes your bonnet!'" (*See Note V, Addenda.*)

I only know one instance of what might be called revenge proper. It was a large black cat of the name of Imp. The poor fellow was exceedingly ill-used by the servant maid, who used to beat him on every occasion possible. Imp's dislike to the girl was very great, although he evidently was afraid to attack her, but one day this servant was coming downstairs with a tray of dishes, and seeing both her hands full, Imp thought he ought not to miss such a golden opportunity for retaliation. He accordingly flew at her, and scratched both her arms and face severely. So we see that cats, although gentle and forgiving in the extreme to those who love them, do not easily forget an

injury from the hands of a stranger or cat-hater. (*See Note W, Addenda.*)

The reader must have often heard that cats seem to possess some wonderful instinct which enables them to predict certain kinds of coming calamities,—such as earthquakes. and different sorts of explosion. Personally, I know one instance of this, although I cannot explain it, viz., our ship's cat taking to the rigging and sitting on the main-truck *before* our vessel was discovered to be on fire. Another I have from my grandfather —an officer in the 1st Royals at the time of the last Anglo-Franco war. My grandmother was bending down, taking something from a chest on the floor, when suddenly the whole window was blown to splinters—dust almost—around her, with the thunder of some dreadful explosion. It was a transport that had entered the harbour—Kiel, I think—some days before, laden with war munitions, and which had blown up with all hands. But it was remarked by every one on the quay, that the ship's cat had been

sitting all the morning of the explosion, on the vessel's main-truck.

Cats are sometimes very fond of horses. I know an instance of this where the stable-cat was very much attached to a certain horse, and that animal evidently reciprocated the cat's kindly feelings. And Pussy used to stand quietly, and allow the horse to lick her fur *the wrong way*, and indeed seemed to enjoy it. (*See Note G, Addenda.*)

We all know how proud Miss Puss is of her song. Barring a certain drowsy monotony, which acts like a narcotic both on herself and kittens, and at times even on human beings, there isn't much melody in it, however. This power of singing becomes lost in sickness, and also in extreme old age. I know of a cat, of very advanced years, that had given up singing for many a day, until a kitten—a famous musician in its way—came to reside at her house. Then poor old Pussy tried hard to get out a bar or two, and her efforts to succeed were quite

ludicrous. Being laughed at she flew into a passion, and put her spite out on the happy little kitten. The more this spirited pussy was thrashed however, the louder it sang; so the old cat left the room in disgust.

The days and years of a cat's life, are on an average fourteen, but many live very much longer. Fifteen and seventeen are very common ages for Pussy to die at. The longest time I have ever known a cat live, was till its twenty-second year, but I have heard of them dying at the age of thirty.

It is quite a common thing for a cat to feed itself with milk or cream, by dipping her forepaw in the jug, and then licking it. Pussy is very awkward at drinking water from a crystal tumbler. At first she will generally thrust her head too far in, which will make her sneeze; then she will sit and eye the glass for a time, as if considering how far the water comes up. Not content with ocular demonstration, she will next put a paw cautiously in, until the extreme end of her toes

touches the water, and thus, after marking the distance, she can drink in comfort.

A certain cat which had been reared on the spoon, used, when full-grown, to sit up on her hind-legs, and reaching down the spoon to her mouth with her paws, swallow the contents. The same cat used to drink milk, if poured into her mouth from a jug, or any dish with a spout to it. So expert at that trick did she become, that, sitting up as usual, she used to receive and swallow a continuous stream poured into her throat from a height of three feet. (*See Note X, Addenda.*)

For the subject matter, of the remainder of this chapter, I am indebted to a lady who takes a great interest in feline nature. (*See Note H, Addenda.*)

"It is certain," she says, "that cats have some strange instinct, that sends them, when lost or starving, to certain people. They have followed me in gay crowded streets, and met me in fields; I have gone into shops and bought milk and rolls for the

starvelings; and have gone again to the same place, and they were gone,—doubtless, cats on the tramp and destitute. I have known a friend's cat lost for five days, and it never attempted to make its sorrows known, until I passed before the window of an underground room, when her shrieks were horrible to hear, and so prolonged, that the passers-by stopped to listen. I remained speaking to the poor creature, whose claws were rattling against the shut door, until the key was brought, and pussy set free."

She relates an instance of a young surgeon, who was on his way to join his ship, to sail to the antipodes, and who was followed to the very boat by a pretty little kitten. As it seemed bent on being a sailor, the surgeon put the poor thing in his pocket. It was presented to a lady on board, who was interested in its story, and is now doing duty among the cats of South Australia,—a country, by the bye, where cats are more fully appreciated than here.

Beda was a beautiful blue tabby. One summer's morning, down in Devon, she had

been missed for hours, and on being called, a viper glided out from a thicket in the garden, closely followed by the cat. The snake—until killed by a lady—kept moving off, but every moment turning round, and hissing at Beda, who, however, was in no ways put about. The following also tends to show that cats have no fear of snakes :—

"At Artea, in the province of Orissa, a cobra had his den under a mulberry-tree, near a garden walk. One day our English tabby cat, Beda, had been missing with all her kits for some hours. She was found at the foot of the mulberry-tree, teaching her children to pat the cobra on the head, every time he popped it out. When the head was protruded too far, a stroke from puss herself, caused its speedy withdrawal. Thinking the game dangerous, the cobra, which measured two inches in diameter, was dug out and killed. We were afterwards told by the natives, that no snake will kill a cat, as they dislike the fur."

Cats are like dogs, and generally have a favourite among the litter, the handsomest.

Once when Beda was nursing in India, a wild cat sprang in by the open window, and tried to seize the kittens. Beda made off with her pet, and the wild cat was beaten out. Beda, however, forgot where she had hidden the favourite, nor would she be consoled with the other members of her family. A search was accordingly made, and the pet kitten at last found on a sofa, in an adjoining bungalo.

This lady's cat never attempted to touch the canary, nor indeed any birds about the place.

CHAPTER IX.

THE TWO "MUFFIES."—A TALE.

While I was yet a little school-boy, there came about my father's house and premises a plague of rats. They came in their thousands, as if summoned by the trumpet-tones of a rodentine Bradlaugh or Odger. They took the farm-yard and outhouses by storm, laid siege to the dwelling-house, and, from the thoroughly business-like manner they conducted their operations, and went into winter quarters, it was quite evident they meditated a stay of some duration. Sappers and miners, or royal engineers, were employed to drive tunnels and galleries under every floor, with passages leading to the grain-lofts above. Foraging parties were appointed to every stack of corn and rick of hay. The henhouse was laid under contribution to furnish eggs and feathers, and black-mail was levied from the very cows. The eaves of the well-thatched barns and

byres were apportioned to their wives, their aged, and infirm, while the poor sparrows were dislodged from their comfortable, well-lined nests to make room for little naked baby rats; and so effectually was every department worked, and so well did every branch of the service do its duty, that Cardwell himself, nay, even Bismarck, Moltke & Co., could not have suggested anything in the way of improvement.

At all these doings my honest father looked very blue, and employed his time principally in expending various sums of money in vermin-killers, and in reading works on toxicology. The result of his study was, that many tempting morsels and savoury tit-bits were placed in convenient corners, for the benefit of the invaders. It seemed indeed for their benefit: they didn't care a straw for tartar-emetic, appeared to get fat on arsenic, while strychnia only strengthened their nervous systems, and morphia made them fierce.

Now Gibbie was the house cat, a very large and beautiful red tabby. In his prime

he had been a perfect Nimrod of the feline race. Scorning such feeble game as the domestic mouse, his joy was to ramble free and unfettered among the woods and forests, by the loneliest spots at the river's brink, and among the mountains and rocks; often prolonging his hunting excursions for days together, but never returning without a leveret or fine young rabbit. These fruits of the chase he did not always bring home, but often presented to his various human friends in the adjoining village; for Gibbie was known far and near, and even his lordship's surly old gamekeeper, though he raised his gun at the sight of the cat, forbore to fire when he saw who the bold trespasser was. Many a rare and beautiful bird did Gibbie carry home alive, among others, I remember, a beautiful specimen of the corncrake; nor can I forget pussie's manifest disgust, when the bird was allowed to fly away. Just two days after, he brought home a crow, but this time the head was wanting. By the banks of the Denburn he one day fought and slew a large pole-cat; this he

carefully skinned, and dragged home. Gibbie was as well-known in the country-side as the witch-wife, or the pack-merchant, and more respected than either; and people often came to our house to beg for "ae nicht o' Gibbie," as "the rottens (rats) at their town (farm) were gettin' raither thrang and cheeky."

The loan was always granted.

"Gibbie, go," was all my mother would say, and off trotted puss by the party's side, with his tail gaily on the perpendicular; for he knew, as well as cat could, that rare sport and a rich treat of the sweetest cream, would be the reward of his compliance.

But Gilbert did not confine himself to hunting only; he was an expert fisher. For hours he would watch at one spot on the banks of a river, with his eyes riveted on the water, until some unhappy trout came out to bask in the sun's rays. This was Gibbie's opportunity. For a moment only his lips and tail quivered with extreme anxiety, then down, swift as Solan goose, he had dived with aim unerring, and seized his finny prey, with which he came quietly to

bank, and trotted off homewards, to enjoy the delicious morsel in some quiet corner all to himself. Rabbits, hares, and game of all kinds, Gibbie parted with freely; but a trout was a treat, and he never shared it with man or mortal.

But Gibbie was now old. Nineteen summers had come and gone since he had skylarked with his mother's tail, and his limbs had waxed stiff, and his once bright eyes were dimmed. He seldom went to the woods now, and when he did he returned sorrowfully and minus. He preferred to dose by the parlour fire, or nurse his rheumatism before the kitchen grate; and while nodding over the embers, many a scene, I warrant, of his earlier years came to his recollection, and many a stirring adventure by flood and field stole vividly back to memory, and thus he'd fight his battles o'er again, and kill his rabbits thrice.

"Gibbie," said my father one day, thoughtfully removing his pipe from his mouth; "Gibbie, you've got some game in you yet, old boy."

"Oh, aye," said Gibbie, for he was the pink of politeness, and never failed to reply when civilly addressed.

"Well," continued my father, "you shall have a good supper, and a night among the rats in the grain-loft."

"Wurram!" replied the cat, which doubtless meant that he was perfectly willing, and that it would be a bad job for the rats. So the programme was duly carried out, and Master Gilbert was shut up among the foe.

Early in the morning, my father, who had not closed an eye all the night, opened the door, and, lame and bleeding, out limped his old favourite, shaking his poor head—raw with wounds—in the most pitiful manner possible. The brave beast had fought like a tiger all the night long, nearly two score of rats lay dead around, while the blood lay in pools on the decks, with as much hair and fluff, as if a dozen Kilkenny cats had been contending for victory—and got it. That night's ratting proved fatal to old Gibbie. The dreadful wounds he had received never healed, and after much deliberation it was

determined that an end should be put to the poor animal's sufferings.

So honest Hughoc, the stable-boy, was sent with Gibbie in a bag to drown him.

"Is he gone?" said my mother anxiously, when he returned. And we bairns were all in tears.

"Gone, ma'am?" replied Hughoc; "aye, if he had been a horse, and, beggin' your pardon, a deevil forbye, the river would hae ta'en him doon,—sic a spate (flood) I never saw in my born days."

Notwithstanding all this, Gibbie was at that moment finishing the contents of his saucer, and drying his wet sides before the sitting-room fire, and when we entered, he was singing a song to himself, like the ancient philosopher he was. But the poor cat lived but one short week longer. He died, as bardie Burns has it, "a fair strae death" in his own nook, and was slowly and sadly laid to rest, beneath an aged rowan tree at the end of the garden. And the berries on that tree grew redder ever after, at least we thought so; but we never dared to taste

or touch them, they were sacred to the memory of poor dead and gone Gibbie.

In the meantime the plague of rats continued unabated, and their ravages seemed rather to increase than diminish. But their reign was nearly at an end. One day my father received the joyful intelligence that a splendid young lady-kitten, was in need of a comfortable home—salary no object.

Away with a basket trudged my little brother and self, and after a long walk came to young pussy's residence, and had the satisfaction of finding both kitten and mistress at home. The former, indeed a beauty, and faultlessly marked, was engaged alternately in drinking butter-milk, and washing her face before a small looking-glass.

"Aye, my bonnie bairn,"—I was the bonnie bairn, not my brother,—"she's a perfect wee angel, and ye maun be good till her; ye maunna pu' her by the tail, and ye maun gie her lots o' milk, and never let her want for a lookin'-glass."

We promised to grudge her nothing that could in any way conduce to her happiness

and comfort, and were allowed to carry her off. Before we reached home, we had taken her from the basket, and with all the solemnity the occasion demanded, baptized her in a running stream, and called her name Muffie. Once fairly established in her new quarters, the kit lost no time in commencing hostilities against the rats, and blood, not butter-milk, became her war-cry. One day as she sat admiring herself in the glass, a large rat unexpectedly appeared in the kitchen; and although but little larger than himself, Kittie at once gave chase, not only to his hole, but into his hole. For the next three minutes the squeaking was quite harrowing to listen to; but presently pussy re-appeared stern foremost, and dragging with her the rat—dead. This she deposited before the fire, growling whenever any one went near it, as much as to say, "Lay but a finger on it, and you yourself may expect to pay the same penalty for your rashness." The little thing, indeed, seemed swelling with pride and importance, and must have felt considerably bigger than an ordinary

sized ox, and as fierce as a Bengal tiger. In one moment she had bounded from kit to cat-hood. Buttermilk and a looking-glass! Bah! Blood alone could satisfy her ambition now.

Little Muffie was left that night in sole charge of the kitchen, and next morning, no less than five large rats, lay side by side on the hearth, as if waiting a *post mortem*, and wee pussie, with her white breast dabbled in gore, exhausted and asleep, lay beside them. In less than a week, she had bagged upwards of forty, and no doubt wounded twice that number. And now fear and consternation began to spread in the enemies' camp. Such doings had never been heard of among them, even traditionally. The oldest inhabitant shook his grey muzzle, and gave it up; but added,—

"Friends, brethren, rodents! it is time to shift. No one knows whose turn may come next. True, it is a pity to leave such jolly quarters, when everything was going on so pleasantly. We have seen our fattest wives and our biggest braves borne off; our help-

less babes have not been safe from the clutches of that dreaded monster, with the ferocity of a fiend in the skin of a mouse, and lest worst befall us, *go we must*."

And go they did.

Old Tom Riddle, the parish clerk, who might have been seen any night, staggering homewards in the short hours, was well-nigh scared out of the little wits that remained to him, by meeting, as he said,—

"Thoosands upon thoosands o' rottens, haudin' up the road in the direction o' the farm o' Brockenclough."

"Confoond it," he added, when some one ventured to cast a doubt on his statement; "wasn't it bright moonlicht, and didn't I see them wi' my ain een, carryin' their wee anes in their mooths, and leadin' their blin' wi' a strae?"

Whether old Tom exaggerated or not is hard to say; but sure enough, next morning there was not a rat to be seen or heard about my father's premises; and it is likewise correct that about the same time, the honest farmer of Brockenclough, began to

complain loudly of the destruction by these gentry of his straw and oats. "He liked," he said, "to see a few o' the beasties rinnin' aboot a farm-toon. That was a sign o' plenty; but when they could be counted by the score, it fairly beat cock-fechtin."

For the next twelve months of her existence, Muffie led a very quiet and peaceful life. She was now in her prime—and a more beautifully marked tabby it would have been difficult to imagine—but, as yet, no male of her species had gained her youthful affections. But her time soon came, for strolling one day in the woods, trying to pick up a nice fat linnet for her dinner, Muffie met her fate, and her fate followed her home even to the garden gate, then darted off again to his native woodland. His history was briefly this. He was not born of respectable parentage, and I question, too, whether his parents, were at all more honest than they ought to have been. His mother was a half-wild animal, brought by a half-cracked colonel from the West Indies, and she bore him in the woods, and there she

suckled and reared him, and it was no doubt owing to the wild gipsy life he led, and the amount of freedom and fresh air he enjoyed, that he grew so fine an animal. At any rate, I never have seen his match. An immense red tabby he was, with short ears on a massive head, splendid eyes, and a tail that no wild cat need have been ashamed of. Muffie and her lover used to hold their meetings in the ruins of an old house near a wood, and my brothers and I made a rash vow, to attempt the capture of the beautiful stranger in this same building. Accordingly, one fine moonlight night, missing Lady Muff, and guessing she was on the spoon, we sallied out and made our way to the ruin. My brothers were told off to guard the door and windows, and on me alone devolved the somewhat unpleasant duty, of bagging the cat. With this intention I entered as cautiously as a mouse, and sure enough there sat the happy pair, contentedly, on the cold hearthstone. So engrossed were they in looking at each other, that they never perceived me until quite close upon them. With

the agility of a young monkey, I threw myself on the Tom-cat and seized him by the back. That is exactly what *I* did. His proceedings were somewhat different, and considerably more to the point, for after making his four teeth meet in the fleshy part of my middle finger, he slid from my grasp like a conger-eel, and went hand over hand up the chimney, followed by the justly indignant Lady Muff,—and I was left lamenting. For the next six weeks, I had the satisfaction of going to school with my arm in a sling. I say satisfaction, because my misfortune was the cause of a great alteration, in the manner of the schoolmaster towards me. Previously it was usual with me to be thrashed "*ter die*, and well shaken," which was not at all nice on a winter's day; but now all this was changed, and I was not beaten at all. The pedagogue spoke to me subduedly, and with a certain amount of conciliatory awe in his manner, and I observed that he always kept a chair or form between my person and his, lest I should at any time take hydrophobia without giving sufficient warning, and bite

the poor man. Seeing how well the sling worked, I did not hesitate to wear it, for fully a month after my hand was quite healed, with the exception of the cicatrices, which the grave only will obliterate.

Although beaten in our first efforts, we did not give up the idea of capturing this vagabond Tom-tabby, yet it was only through the instrumentality of Muffie, we eventually succeeded. We kept her at home, put a saucerfull of creamy milk in a shady nook of the garden for her lover, and whenever he appeared, which he always did at the hour of gloaming, his betrothed was permitted to meet him, and although he invariably beseeched her to fly with him, she was prevented from acceding to his very reasonable request, by being tethered to a gooseberry bush by a long string. Love and time tamed this feline Ingomar. He left his abode in the forest, exchanged the wild-wood's shade for the stable's roof, bartered his freedom for the ties of matrimony, or catrimony,—in short, he married Muffie, adopted civilisation, and became barn-cat *par excellence*. But no

amount of persuasion could ever entice him into the dwelling-house, nor did he ever suffer a human finger to pollute his fur.

I am sorry to say that Ingomar did not at all times behave well to his wife; in fact, at times he was a brute. It was his pleasure that she should sit for hours together in the garden, simply that he might look at her; if she as much as hinted at retiring, he treated her exactly as the Lancashire clod-hoppers do their wives,—he knocked her down and jumped upon her. Muffie had five bonnie kittens, and she put them to bed on the parlour sofa. Ingomar detested refinement as much as Rob Roy did.

"The sons of McGregor, weavers! Bring those kittens forth, and place them here on straw; *I* will see to their rearing."

That is what Ingomar said, and Muffie mutely complied; and those kittens grew up as wild as himself. From sparrows they got to chickens, from chickens to grouse and game generally, and then got into trouble with the keeper, and had the worst of the argument, which on his part was double-

barrelled. In the early days of his betrothal, Ingomar threw daisies at his beloved, and gambolled with her in mimic strife, but latterly his song was hushed at eventide, and spits and clouts and flying fluff were too often the order of the day.

Poor Ingomar! He was cut down in his prime—slain by a wretched collie-dog. Slowly and sadly we bore him in, his beautiful fur all dabbled in blood, and his once bright eyes fast glazing in death, and tenderly laid him at the widowed Muffie's feet. Now listen to the remarkable behaviour of that lady. The widowed Muffie did not weep, neither, in consequence of not weeping, did she die; she did an attitude though, then growled and spat, and spitting growled again, and finally gave vent to her feelings by springing through the parlour window and escaping to the woods. And here with shame and sorrow for female inconstancy, but in the interests of truth be it written, not only did Muffie not remain long a widow, but that brief widowhood even, was stained by many acts of levity to the memory of the murdered

Ingomar. His skin beautifully preserved (by —*), that skin she did not hesitate to use as a mat, nay, she even *gambolled with the tail of it;* and although she often paid a visit to her husband's grave, it was not to weep she went there, no! but literally to *dance on the top of it.* Such is life! Such are relicts!!

The rest of this pussy's life was entirely uneventful. One circumstance only deserves relating. She was exceedingly fond of me, in fact quite adored me. Oh! that is nothing, other females have done the same; but Muffie did, what I daresay other females wouldn't,—she at any time would eat a little bit of the end of a candle, or a bit of greased peat from my hand, while refusing beef-steak or cream from any one else. When I was sent to a distant school, and could only visit my home once a week or fortnight, the house bereft of me had no longer any charms for poor Muffie, and she took to the woods. Perhaps she enjoyed rambling

* In my next edition I shall insert a bird-stuffer's name here. Space to be let to the highest bidder.

amid scenes hallowed by the recollection of her early love. She seldom returned home until the day of my accustomed arrival, when she was always there to welcome me. Now that she should have known the usual day for my appearance was nothing remarkable, but it was strange that, if anything interfered with my coming, puss was also absent, nor did my arrival on any other day prevent her from being at home at least an hour before me. One day—alas! that one day that *must* come to all created things—my Muffie was not there to meet me, and she never came again. After a long search I found her beneath a tree, stark and stiff. Her gentle eyes were closed for aye! I would never feel again her soft caress, nor hear her low loving purr—dear Muffie was *dead*.

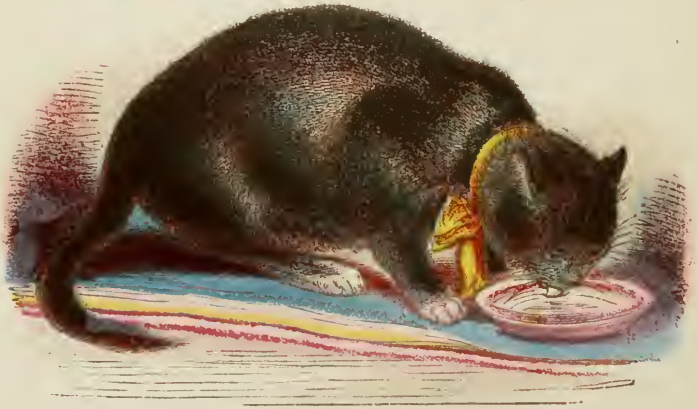
But dry your eyes, gentle lady, and listen to the story of

MUFFIE THE SECOND.

I call my present cat Muffie, partly in remembrance of my old favourite, and partly because I think it such a cosy little name

WHITE.

First Prize—Owned by R. H. Young, Esq.



BLACK.

First Prize—Owned by Mr. J. Harper.

for a pet puss. Bless her little heart, she is sitting on my shoulder while I write, and no slight burden either, her fighting weight being something over twelve pounds. A splendid tabby, she is evenly and prettily marked; her lovely face vandyked with white, and her nose tipped with crimson, like a mountain daisy. She is six years of age, and the mother of over one hundred kittens. Three-fourths of these have found respectable homes,—most of them were bespoken before birth,—and if they have only been half as prolific as their mother, Muffie must be progenitor of thousands.

A very ambitious kitten you were, too, my pretty Muff. I first picked you up at an hotel, when no bigger than a ball of worsted. Your brothers and sisters, and even your big ugly mother turned and fled, but you stood and spat—didn't you, puss? and that fetched me. Your favourite seat, too, was the top of the parlour door; and during the first twelve months of your existence, sure didn't you tear to pieces three sets of window curtains? didn't you smash all the flower-

pots? weren't you constantly clutching down the table-cloth and breaking the china and glass, running along the key-board of the piano, and jumping down the stool? What chance did a silk umbrella stand with you? What hope of existence had my patent-leather boots? Was it fair to catch flies on my "Sunset on Arran" before the paint was dry? Was it right to upset my ink-bottle on the table-cloth, or to break the head off my praying Samuel, which head you coolly made a mouse of, and finally hid in my shoe? Or was it at all proper to make such earnest, though happily unsuccessful, endeavours to hook your master's eyes out as soon as he opened them in the morning? But marriage sobered you, Muffie; and I never can forget the extreme joy you manifested on the birth of your first kittens. Your first idea, I'm told, was to make "mousies" of them; then you thought of eating them. But how anxiously you waited my arrival on that auspicious morning. You came twice to my bedroom to hurry me down, and I dared not stop to shave. Then each

kitten in succession was held up between your forepaws to receive its just meed of admiration. But I hardly think, Miss Muff, your song of joy would have been quite so loud and jubilant, had you known I was selecting two to drown. And each succeeding period since then, you have tried to have your kittens in my bed, and twice you have been only too successful. There, now, go down, my shoulder aches; besides, I have to address the British public.

Muffie, like her master, has been a wanderer,—and she prefers it. To her, home and master are synonymous terms. Were I to make my bed in the midst of a highland moor, she would not desert me. If I were to place my sea-chest on the top of dark Loch-na-gar,—and that would be no easy matter,—and leave it there for a month, I should find Muffie on the top of it when I returned.

It might very naturally be supposed, that a cat would form but a poor travelling companion, and be rather troublesome. It is all custom, I suppose. Miss Muff, at the smallest

computation, must have travelled nearly 20,000 miles with me; and she can always take care of herself much better than a dog can. From constant experience, she has become quite cosmopolitan in her habits. On the evening before "flitting day" she is more than usually active, ambling round and snuffing at each box as it is being packed, and rubbing her shoulder against it, singing all the while in a most exhilarating manner. As night closes, she, as a rule, with few exceptions, disappears for a time, going most likely to bid good-bye to her friends, whom she seldom sees again in this world, but never fails to be back early in the morning, when, after a hurried breakfast, she curls herself up in her little travelling "creel," and goes quietly off to sleep. In a railway-carriage or steam-boat, she is allowed to roam about at her own sweet will; but by night her place is by her master's side, and a more faithful watch he could not have. On arriving at an hotel, after dinner pussy is permitted to go out to see the place. The first night of her sojourn in a strange town, is

always spent by Muffie in the open air; and, wonderful to relate, she always enters in the morning by the *front door*, although put out at the back. How she can find her way round with accuracy, sometimes a distance of half a mile of strange streets, or how she can tell the hotel door from any other, I cannot say; but she does. Once I gave her basket in charge of a railway porter at a London station, to take upstairs while I got my own ticket and the dog's. The poor fellow soon returned with bleeding face and hands, to say that the cat had escaped and disappeared in the crowd. There was no time to wait to look for her, my luggage was on board, and the train about to start, so I hurried off to take my seat. Very much to my surprise, I was hailed from a first-class carriage by my pet herself, who appeared rejoiced to see me, and indeed was much more calm and self-possessed, under the circumstances, than her master.

Once, in a strange town—Liverpool,—Muffie disappeared in the most mysterious manner, and was absent for three whole weeks.

From some words that I had heard the landlady's son drop, I suspected foul play; so I went straight to the offices of the City Scavengering Department to prefer a very modest request, viz., to have all the ash-pits cleaned out within a certain radius of my lodgings.

"All this work for a cat!" said the chief inspector. "Why, such a thing has no precedent;" and he smiled at my cheek, I suppose.

"But," said I, "you can make this case the precedent; and it is so valuable a cat, you know."

Aid came from an unexpected quarter. One of the officers was a Scotchman, and took my part like everything. Valuable property, he argued, had been stolen and destroyed; and if we should wait until the usual time for cleaning the ashpits, all hope of putting the blame on the right party, would be lost for ever."

"What chance," said his good-natured chief, "have I against two of you?" So the order was given, and the ash-pits emp-

tied. This took two or three mornings' work, and many dead cats were found; in fact, every day I held a post-mortem examination on one or two poor brutes, and of course the men wanted a glass of grog; so that the business cost me "a power" of rum. But no dead Muffie appeared. In the meantime I had to go to London without my puss; and a few days after, Lady Muff likewise arrived by train. She had returned to my rooms at Liverpool, exactly three weeks from the day she disappeared, and *had kittens one hour after*.

Muffie I do not think ever killed a mouse, although very fond of catching them. All she cares for is the sport. She invariably brings her little victim into my room, and placing it on the hearth-rug, looks up in my face, and mews, as much as to say,—

"Just observe, master, the fun I shall have with this little cuss; and see what a clever mouser your Muff is."

While she is saying this, the mouse has escaped, but is speedily recaptured and returned to the rug. After throwing it up

in the air two or three times, and catching it before it falls, the wee "cowering timorous beastie" is left to its own freedom, Muffie walking away in a careless, meditative sort of mood, and the mousie makes good his escape. Not finding a hole, it hides below something, from under which something it is soon raked out again; and so the cruel game goes on, till the trembling little creature, with its shiny eyes, grows sick with hope deferred, and faints away. Seeing this, pussy, after turning it over once or twice with mittened paw, jumps on my shoulder with a fond "purr-rn," and begins to sing. The play is over, and by-and-by the mouse revives, and is graciously permitted to retire, which it sets about doing with becoming modesty, and an air at once subdued and deprecatory. Muffie is still on my shoulder, benignly singing. Their eyes meet, and a little dialogue ensues. Mousie says, with hers,

"Oh! please, your ladyship, may I go, ma'am? I feel so all-overish; your claws are *so* sharp, and your teeth *so* dreadful; and I'm but a little, little mouse."

To which pussy replies,—

"Yes; you may go. I shan't eat you to-day; only don't do it again."

But why, you ask, should I permit such cruel sport? Because, intelligent and gentle reader, any interference of mine would change the play from a comedy in the parlour to a tragedy in the cellar.

I have neither fishing nor hunting exploits to tell of about Muffie. She is celebrated only as a great traveller, for her faithful devotion to her master, and for her care over even his property.

Last summer I spent a month in a beautiful sequestered village in Yorkshire. My companions were, as usual, my Newfoundland, Muffie, a pet starling, and another dog. Muffie is very much attached to this birdie, allowing it to hop about her, like a crow on a water buffalo. This starling, I think, is the most amusing little chap in all creation. He is a good linguist and an accomplished musician, and is never silent—if he is, he is either asleep or doing mischief. As he says whatever comes into his head,

and interlards his discourse with fragments of tunes and Bravos! the effect is at times startling. The way he jumbles his nouns together, and trots out every adjective he knows, to qualify every noun, is something worth listening to. In the summer evenings, we used to go out for long rambles in the country lanes. The dog—Theodore Nero—felt himself in duty bound on these occasions, not only to look after his master, but even to take the cat under his protection. The starling stalked flies from my shoulder. Sometimes he would stay longer snail-hunting, behind a hedge, than I deemed prudent; a glance from me was all Muffie wanted, to be after him. I would wait and listen; and presently I would hear Dick excitedly exclaiming, "Eh? eh? What *is* it?"—a favourite expression of his: "What *is* it? You rascal! you rascal!" and back he would fly to his perch, apparently quite thunderstruck at the impudence of the cat.

Muffie bids me say she is quite happy and all alive. And I would add, she is very

much all alive, most interestingly so, in fact. But that did not prevent her, last night, from preparing for me, what was doubtless meant for a very pretty surprise and a high compliment. The cats in the neighbourhood, hearing that I was writing a book in their favour, with Lady Muff as chief musician, resolved to serenade me; and they did. Being Christmas eve, I took them for the waits at first. I am sorry now that I so far forgot myself, as to throw cold water over the assembly; but I sincerely trust that they did not know, that the gentleman in white, who appeared on the balcony, and so unceremoniously checked their harmony, was the illustrious author of "CATS."

CHAPTER X.

BLACK TOM, THE SKIPPER'S IMP.

Tom's Introduction.

No one in the ship had the slightest idea how Tom came on board, or who brought him, or where he came from. He made his first appearance in public while, outward bound, we were crossing the Bay of Biscay—that strange mysterious sea, beneath whose waves the bones of so many of our bravest countrymen lie bleaching. It was a roughish night, squally rather, without much sea on, but the wind changing its mind every minute, whisking into foam the crests of the inky waves, and carrying the spray far into the rigging. It was a night to try the sea-legs of any one, so jerky and uncertain was the vessel's motion; and the oldest sailors staggered like drunken men, and were fain to cling to rigging or shrouds. I was smoking on the quarter-deck just before turning in,—it had gone six bells* in the first watch, and

* 11 o'clock.

everything was snug for the night, when something black as Erebus whisked past me, visible but for a moment in the binnacle's light, and disappeared in the darkness forward. I looked inquiringly at the man at the wheel, a serious old seamen, who, in answer to my mute appeal, turned his quid twice in his mouth and, addressing the compass, "That's the devil, sir," said he, "begging your pardon, sir. Came on board to-night when we close-reefed topsails durin' a squall."

There was nothing disrespectful in the man's tone or bearing; indeed he spoke almost with an air of solemnity.

"Usual accompaniment, I suppose," said I, laughing; "blue fire, and a perfume not Rimmelian."

"Dunno what ship that is, sir," said he somewhat curtly; "but there was a flash, young gentleman."

Seeing the man was disinclined to continue the subject, I went below, and, thanks to the ship's motion, was soon in the land of dreams.

Next day broke bright and clear; both wind

and cloud had fled; the sea had gone down, and the vessel was under easy sail. A flock of gulls were circling in the morning air, screaming with delight as they picked the crumbs that floated astern; and all went merrily oh!

Presently the commander* came up, looking anything but sweet; and all hands were immediately summoned aft for a speech. "Officers and men of Her Majesty's gunboat *Tickler*, contrary to the customs and rules of the service, and without my knowledge, to say nothing of sanction, I find that a cat has been brought on board. Will the officer or man who owns the animal kindly step forward?"

Here the officers, verbally, and the men, by their silence, disclaimed all ownership of poor puss.

"Then," continued the commanding officer, "as no one seems to own it, I have but one course. Bring up the cat."

*Throughout the story, commander, captain, and skipper mean one and the same person. In the Royal Navy, a senior lieutenant generally commands a gunboat, and is called captain for courtesy, and skipper behind his back.

All eyes were instantly turned towards the stern grating, which naturally caused the captain to wheel round; and there, sure enough, as mim as a mouse, with his tail curled round his legs for warmth, and looking on the very best of terms with himself and all creation, sat a large black Tom cat. He lowered his brows as he returned the skipper's glance, and his eyes sparkled crimson and green. "Midshipman of the watch," was the order, "see that cat overboard."

"Ay ay, sir," sang out the middy. "Forenoon watch, cat walks the plank, heave with a will—cheerily does it."

Puss was on his legs in a moment, back erect, hair on end, and tail like a bottle-brush, spitting, sputtering, and behaving altogether in a "highly mutinous and insubordinate" manner. This conduct very nearly led to a fatal termination, by a whole shower of belaying-pins, which, however, hurtled harmlessly over his head. "An inch of a miss is as good as a mile," thought Tom; "while there's life there's hope, and I'll give you a race for it, my lads." And he cleared the

deck at three bounds, and dived below, followed by the whole watch. Three minutes' trampling and howling below, then up through the fore hatch came pursuers and pursued, pussy leading and the sailors astern. Up the rigging shinned the cat.

"Follow your leader," roared the men.

The chase now became general and most exciting; and with a cheer all hands joined, evidently more for the fun of the thing, than with any intention of harming the cat. Up the rigging and down the stays, alow and aloft, out on the flying jib-boom and along the hammock nettings. Sure never before were such feats of agility seen on board a British Man o' War; the men seemed monkeys, the cat the devil incarnate. With a strength seemingly supernatural, Tom at length scrambled up, and took refuge above the main truck where the Dutch Admiral of old hoisted the broom, swearing, as only Dutchmen can, that he would sweep the English from the sea; and the men returned to the deck, gasping and red from their futile exertions, to await further orders.

Black Tom speaks a Piece.

"Curses on the brute!" muttered the commander. "Am I to sail the seas with a black cat on my main-truck? Steward, bring my revolver." The revolver was brought, but the captain's aim seemed unsteady; he fired all the six chambers, without any further result than chipping the main-top-gallant yard. Poor Tom, seeing the serious turn matters had taken, and that his death was compassed, determined to speak a few words in his own behalf; and with this intention he lifted up his fore-paw, and, now looking below, now appealing to heaven, he delivered an harangue, the like of which none of us had ever listened to on shore, much less afloat. His meaning, however, was perfectly plain.

Around him, he said, behold a waste of waters; he was far from land; he had no boat; and though he knew he could swim, although he never tried, he would rather die than wet his feet. Had we no compassion, no bowels of mercies? He wanted to harm nobody.

What good could shooting him do? He was willing to remain where he then stood for the rest of the voyage, in fact to do anything or everything, if his life were only spared.

The captain smiled. "I thought," said he, "I was a better shot; however, give the devil his due." And he ordered all hands to treat the cat kindly, if ever he came below again. Tom retained his elevated seat for fully two hours, and finally fell sound asleep. Waking calm and refreshed, and perhaps somewhat dizzy, he stretched himself a leg at a time, for he hadn't much room, yawned, did an attitude, and came slowly down on deck. He walked at once to the quarter-deck; and, to show that he harboured no ill-feeling, he actually went and rubbed his big black head against the captain's leg.

Tom becomes Ship's Cat.

Henceforward Tom was no longer a mere passenger on board; his name was borne on the ship's books, and he was tolerated both by officers and men. Somehow, Tom became

no favourite. The questionable manner in which he had made his first appearance, and the latent devil that seemed to lurk in his eye, acted like a spell on the natural superstitions of the sailors, more than one of whom was heard to express an opinion that "That black——(alliterative term of endearment used by British seamen) will bring the ship no good luck."

Now, whether out of gratitude for having his life spared, or for some other feline motive known only to puss, certain it is, that Tom attached himself to our commander, and to no one else on board; for whenever that officer came on deck, so did the cat, trotting by his side and enlivening his walk by a song. When any other gentleman happened to be walking with the captain, Tom used to take his station on the hammock nettings and follow every motion of his beloved adopted master with eyes that beamed with admiration. This show of affection was at first indignantly resented by the skipper, and many a good kick Tom used to have for his pains; but the more he was kicked the louder

he sang, so at long last, yielding to the force of circumstances, the skipper ceased to mind him, and the two became inseparable.

Tom Goes on Shore for a Walk.

Nothing very unusual happened during our long voyage to the Cape. Tom went on shore at St. Helena, like any other officer, and it was fondly hoped he would take up his abode on that beautiful island. But having visited the principal places of interest, nearly murdered a poor little dog in James Town, and—this is only conjecture—taken a rat or two at Napoleon's tomb, Tom came off again in the officers' boat.

On Board Again.

The cat might in time have come to be a general favourite in the ship; but he suffered no advances to be made by "any man Jack," as the saying is, and scowled so unmistakably when any one attempted to stroke him, that he was unanimously voted to Coventry, and allowed to do what he liked. Tom had a regular allowance of ship's provisions, like any one else, but his greatest treat was milk

(preserved) and rum thickened with oatmeal. For this he used to come regularly once, and often twice a-day, to the dispensary. His favourite seat was on the weather bulwarks; and there he would often remain for hours, gazing thoughtfully down in the blue clear depths of the tropical ocean.

"He do be counting the jelly-fish and looking for sharks," one man remarked.

"Nay," said another, "he's a-thinking o' home. May-be, he has left a wife and babies in old England."

"Then," said the first speaker, "what a tarnation fool he was, not to stop on shore. Sure, no one sent for him."

"Hush," said the first, "he's an evil spirit, Bill, as sure as a gun; and he belongs to—

THE SKIPPER."

You may easily guess from the foregoing conversation, that the captain himself was no great favourite. He was a little red-haired foxy-faced man, a Scotchman (save the luck), but a Scotchman who hated the land of his forefathers,—

"Whose heart had ne'er within him burned," etc., etc.,

in fact, retaining but one trait of Scottish character, namely his love for Scotch drink. Once round the Cape, and north on our cruising ground—the Mozambique Channel, the skipper shone out in his true colours. His face and nose got daily redder; and the sinister smile that seemed printed there never left his lips. Such a smile I have never seen before nor since, except on the face of a Somali Indian. The first victims to the skipper's wrath were the poor black Kroomen, one of whom was always stationed at the mast head, to look out for strange sails. Now the commander had an eye like a fish-hawk, and generally managed to sight a vessel before even the out-look. God help the out-look when this occurred. He was ordered down at once, and in one minute more was lashed to the rigging by both wrists, and writhing and shrieking for mercy under the infliction of two dozen with a rope's end, laid on by the sturdy arms of a fellow Krooman. The men, for the slightest offence, had their grog stopped for a week or weeks; and as the proceeds went to swell the sick-

fund—a fund to purchase comforts for the patients—I had usually more money in my hands than I knew how to expend, until I happily thought of a plan to get rid of the surplus cash.

"Brown," I would say to an officer, after the cloth had been removed, "you look unusually seedy to-day; in fact," looking round the mess, "you all look rather pale; effects of climate, poor devils. I am afraid I have hardly done my duty towards you. Steward, bring in those bananas from the sick-bay, bring also the pineapples, the mangoes, the oranges, the ground nuts, a pomola, and a bottle of madeira. Liquor up, my lads, let us drink the skipper's health. The sick-bay fund is unusually flourishing, so don't forget in every port we come to, to ask me for honey for your rum, milk for your tea, and orange-blossom to perfume your cabins withal."

Anything approaching insubordination among the boys or men or board was punished with flogging—four dozen lashes, with a different bo'swain's mate to each dozen, was the usual dose.

Tom at a Flogging.

Tuesday was flogging day; and to add, if possible, to the terror of the condemned wretch, after the gratings were rigged and the man stripped and lashed thereto, sawdust was sprinkled on the deck all round, to soak up the blood. But at every flogging match

"There sat auld Nick in shape o' beast,"

at least in the shape of Tom the cat, who would not have missed the fun for all the world. There on the bulwark he would sit, his eyes gleaming with satisfaction, his mouth squared, and his beard all a-bristle. He seemed to count every dull thud of his nine-tailed namesake, and emitted short sharp mews of joy when, towards the middle of the third dozen, the blood began to trickle and get sprinkled about on sheet and shroud. Though I never disliked Tom, still, at times such as these, I really believed he was the devil himself as reputed, and would have given two months' pay for a chance to brain him. When the flogging was over, Tom used to jump down and, purring loudly, rub his head against his master's leg.

By at least one half of the crew, Tom was assuredly believed to be—if not old Nick himself—possessed of an evil spirit. A good deal of mumbo jumbo work therefore went on, for the men tried to find favour in Tom's eyes, and many a dainty morsel did this cat of evil repute thus receive; so that he grew and flourished like a green bay-tree, while his coat got glossier and his figure plumper every day.

How Tom used to Fish.

Although well fed and cared for, Tom at times used to forage for himself, not that I ever heard he was a thief—to his honour be it written; but he fished, and very successfully too, without so much as wetting the soles of his beautiful pumps. His *modus operandi* was as follows.

On dark nights in the tropical seas, he used to perch himself on the bulwarks aft, and bend his glittering eyes downwards into the sea. He never sat long thus without a flying-fish, sometimes two, jumping past him or over him, and alighting on deck. Then

Tom would descend, and have a delightful supper, and if not fully satisfied resume his seat and continue the sport. Tom must have gained his knowledge from experience, although the success of his method of fishing is easily explained. It is well known that these fish always fly towards a light, which is therefore often used by the sailors to catch them. The cat required no other light save the glimmering of his two eyes, which in the dark shone like a couple of koh-i-noors.

Tom Takes Charge of a Gun.

Tom was in the habit of going to sleep, in the large pivot gun we used for shelling running-away slavers. For a forenoon nap nothing could have suited him better; it combined the pleasures of solitude with retirement, and moreover was both dark and cool. One fine sunny day, we were in chase of a particularly fast dhow, which, taking no heed of our signal howitzers, evinced a strong disposition to edge in towards the shore, the order was accordingly

given to fire at her with our Big Ben. Before loading, the gunner keeked in to see that all was clear, and sure enough there was Tom, by no means pleased at being disturbed in his siesta. Neither could any amount of "cheety-pussying" entice him from his snuggery, while tickling with the end of a ramrod only made him spit and sputter, and make use of bad language.

"What's the delay?" cried the captain.

"Cat in possession of gun, sir," was the reply.

"Dear me! dear me!" whined the captain, "Rouse him out, and be quick about it."

After a pause.

"He won't rouse out no-how, sir," said the gunner.

"I'm hanged" roared the skipper, "if that rascally dhow isn't landing her slaves inshore. Rouse him out I say. Fire a fuse—*con*found the cat."

"Shoal water ahead, sir," from the man at the mast-head.

"Hard a port, stand by both anchors,"

and round we went just in time to save us. In the meantime a fuse had been inserted in the touch-hole of the gun. Bang! and thus attacked in rear, Tom came out of the gun faster than ever he had done in his life, and took to the rigging, with hair on end and eyes all a-flame.

"Lower away the first and second cutters," was now the order. "It shan't be said, that a cursed cat kept us from capturing a lawful prize. D—— the beast."

(For the benefit of those who love strong language *alias* swearing, it must here be stated, that in courtesy to my lady readers I abstain from giving the skipper's language *verbatim*, for in that respect he would have pleased a Lancashire coal-heaver; he was a don in the use of expletives, although, to his credit be it recorded, while freely launching forth anathemas at the limbs of his men, and consigning their eyes to perpetual punishment, he just as freely let his own eyes have it. Oh, he wasn't particular by any means; he gave it to us all alike—officers and men, cat and Kroo-boys.)

He captured that slaver though—went in the boats personally to do it, and that night the sea was lighted up for miles with a blaze, that spoiled pussy's fishing for once. It was a caution to slavers on shore and sharks at sea. At a good mile's distance we could see to read our last letters from home, by the light of that burning dhow. We were not surprised to see the captain come on board, black with smoke and begrimed with gunpowder, for we had heard desultory firing, but we were slightly taken aback to see Tom meet him in the gangway, and to observe the captain stoop down and tenderly caress him. Perhaps he wanted to make up to him, for his former roughness.

"I've given that chap Carrickfergus," he remarked, in a sort of a general way to us officers; and to me he added, "I suppose the men may have a glass of grog, doctor."

"Certainly," I said. "Steward, splice the main brace." Then the skipper dived below and got drunk, which he had the knack of doing on the very shortest notice.

The Cat's "Cantrips."

Of Tom's adventures on board the saucy little *Tickler*, very much could be written. Somehow, he never was safely out of one scrape till into another. A dear wee mongoose was once brought on board, and would doubtless have become a great pet, if Tom had not broken its back on the first night of its arrival. A monkey was received as a visitor, and with him Tom at once declared war, and kept it up to the bitter end. The monkey's favourite mode of attack, was to run aloft with a belaying-pin, and biding his time, let it drop as if by accident on poor pussy's head. But Tom let him have it sharp and fierce, whenever he caught him. Once I remember the monkey was sitting on his hind-quarters on deck, stuffing his cheeks with cockroaches, and looking as serious as a judge. Tom spied him, and ran cautiously along the bulwarks, then springing on his foe, he seized him round the neck with one arm, and with the other administered such a drubbing, as the poor

thing never had before in his life. The monkey with bleeding face, at length escaped to the maintop, and there cried itself asleep.

Whether or not Tom was the Jonas, who caused all the mishaps that fell upon our little vessel during that four years' cruise, I shall not pretend to say, although all hands forward firmly believed he was. Like the witch-wife in Allan Ramsay's Gentle Shepherd—Tom

"Got the wyte o' a' fell oot;"

and certainly Snarley-yow and his master were never more detested than that black cat, and the skipper eventually came to be.

"LIFE-BOAT'S CREW, AHOY!"

Once, I remember, we experienced a spell of weather so dark and unsettled, that a general gloom prevailed in the ship fore and aft. We were rounding the Cape in mid-winter. First we had a gale of wind, our bulwarks stove in forward, and a boat washed overboard. Then several days with no wind, but a heavy sea on, and the horizon close aboard of us on every side. The

nights were pitchy dark, with thunder and lightning so appalling that no one thought of turning in, till far on in the middle watch. Scenes like these can never be described. They are painted with the finger of awe on the beholder's memory, and time cannot efface them. I can see even now our little vessel, hanging bows on to the side of that dark wave, the hill of water rising above us, the inky gulph beneath, her wet and slippery decks, and the faces of the men that cling to the cordage, ghastly in the lightning's glare. A moment more and we are on the brow of the wave, then down we drive into the very trough of the sea, where, for a few seconds, the ship lies trembling, as if every timber in her sides was instinct with life. On such a night as this Tom fell overboard. This may seem like a descent from the sublime to the ridiculous. It is a fact, however, and was a very disagreeable descent indeed for poor Tom. The life-buoy was almost instantly fired and let go by the commander himself, who alone saw the accident.

"Ease her! stop her!" he roared. "Away life-boat's crew!"

Up tumbled the crew, the boat was lowered, and in two minutes more they had dropped astern, and were pulling with might and main for the now distant life-buoy. The storm had by this time passed over, save an occasional flash of lightning. For fully ten minutes, each time we rose on the crest of a great wave, we could distinctly see the life-buoy's light, burning bright and beacon-like, away to leeward of us; then it flickered feebly, and finally went out.

"Gracious heavens!" exclaimed the Captain, "that light was never extinguished: *it has gone out.*" Five minutes, ten, fifteen minutes elapsed in dead silence. We leant over the bulwarks, and could feel our hearts throbbing against them, as we peered into the darkness and listened for the slightest sound; only an occasional glimmer played along the horizon, only now and then the splash of a breaking wave. Hours passed by, and still no signal from the deep, to tell us aught of life was there; and all that long

dismal night, rockets were let off, bluelights burned, and big guns fired. But the sea gave never a sign. How anxious we all were! No one had a thought of retiring. The captain spent his time in alternately pacing frantically up and down the deck, and in diving down below,—we all knew for what. At last he wept like a child, and tore his hair out in handfuls. I felt sorry for him at first, until I heard him curse his own evil fate, because his fourteen years' service would all be lost. It was self not the poor men he was thinking of.

But the longest time has an end, and morning came at last, and just as the horizon was becoming dimly visible through the rising mist, and silence was reigning fore and aft—for both men and officers were tired out with suspense and long watching —we were all startled and rendered as wide awake as ever we were in our lives. For, borne along on the morning air—breeze it could hardly be called—came a faint shout. One moment all hands listened: it was repeated.

"Shout, my lads," cried the captain, all his manhood returning at once; and such a ringing cheer was sent over the waters, as only could proceed from the lungs of Britain's sailors.

*My! how every face brightened; and, my! how every eye glanced and glittered, as that boat loomed out from the fog. She was soon alongside, all hands were safe, and the first on board was *the skipper's imp*. There was one old sailor who had had been very quiet all the night, but who now burst into such sobbing as I never heard before. The poor man's son had been in the boat.

Did we splice the main-brace? Rather. We spliced it on deck, and we went below to the ward-room and spliced it again; in fact that main brace took a good deal of splicing, then we turned in and slept till noon, and I dreamt I was spliced myself.

Ship on Fire.

If I remember rightly, we were somewhere

*My! a Scottish interjection only translatable by the Greek Ιω! (*Io!*)

in lat. 17° South, and a good way off land. We had been cracking on all the forenoon under steam, after a Northern slave-ship, which we had finally boarded, captured, and taken in tow. A fine pair of heels she had shown us too. We had to burn hams to get within shot of her. But we did at last, and there she was, with a prize crew on board, and the fiery old Arabs glaring like evil spirits at us as they leaned over her taffrail. A breeze had sprung up towards four o'clock, and the orders were given to bank fires and set sail. I was sitting in the ward-room reading, when—

"Look Jim!" I heard some one on deck remark. "Where is that thundering old cat going to now?"

"Bedad then," said Jim, "but he's taking the rigging like a good one anyhow. Shouldn't wonder now if he was going to give us another spache."

I ran up just in time to see the cat shin hand over hand up the main-top gallant mast, and seat himself on the very truck, in the exact spot he had occupied in his

first adventure on board, when the captain fired at him.

It had gone three bells in the first dog watch;* we had just finished tea, and gone on deck to smoke our evening pipe. We were making ourselves very comfortable on the stern gratings, and our Scotch engineer—naval engineers for the most part are Scotch—was singing "For we are homeward bound;" not that we were homeward bound by a long chalk, but it gave us the idea we were, don't you know? and made us feel all the jollier, when the quartermaster came aft, and addressing the officer of the watch—

"I beg your pardon, sir," he said, leisurely, turning his quid in his mouth, "but I think, sir, there be a strong smell of fire right amidships."

We went forward.

The second cutter lay bottom upwards, between the fore and main masts, and from under its gunnel were curling little puffs of light blue smoke, for all the world as if

* Half-past five p.m.

some one were smoking a cigar beneath the boat. But the smoke had *the smell of burning wood.*

Ding, ding, ding, ding, ding, ding. Ah! had Edgar Allan Poe heard that bell, he might have added one other stanza to that strange wild poem of his. *Ding, ding, ding, ding.* You never heard it, did you reader? Well, it is a pleasure you still have before you. The breeze was freshening every minute, the sea was getting its back up, and darkness thickening around us. But what mattered darkness, we should soon light up old ocean with our burning ship.

Ding, ding, ding—up tumble the hands at the dread summons. The hoses are laid, the pumps rigged and manned as if by magic, and before the last sound of the bell is borne away on the breeze, every man is at quarters, steady, grave, and silent—waiting. *Waiting?* Aye; fancy having to wait for a single moment, with the fire crackling under the broiling deck, and tons of powder under hatches. But service is service—the captain alone has not responded to the alarm, and the

officer of the watch has gone to call him. Worthy man, he was—

> "Not fou, he just was glorious,
> O'er a' the ills of life victorious."

"Oh!" he said; "ship's on fire, is she. Then go you to blazes."

He came up soon, however, and every man that night did his duty. Nothing in the world, save British pluck and coolness, could have conquered that fire. It was the padding at the back of the boiler that had caught, and burning through, had kindled the coals behind, and when the decks were scuttled, the scene below was like a red raging hell.

In less than two hours however, the flames were got under and the fire extinguished; and, saving the watch on deck, the crew, tired and bruised, and many of them scalded, had gone below, while the carpenters were busy repairing decks; for in a man-of-war every trace of recent danger, whether from wind or fire or foe, is speedily erased.

A shoal of sharks that had been following the ship expectant, disappointed, sought

deeper water, and black Tom, the cat, came down from his perch on the main-truck, singing a song of deliverance.

Minor Mishaps.

It would take a long time indeed to narrate all the misadventures we had in that cruise. We got quite used to running on shore, being awakened any night, with that strange grating noise beneath our keel, and the sudden cessation of all motion, which tells the experienced sailor better than words can, that the ship has struck. One bright moonlight night, far on in the middle watch, we ran aground on the Lyra reef. Luckily the tide was not full nor the wind blowing. By next morning we had lowered the boats, and sent over the guns to lighten ship, and lay waiting for the tide. A bright sky, and a blue, blue sea all around, with never a sail in sight, nay, not even a bird. The waters so pellucid and clear, that leaning over the bulwarks we could see the yellow sand at the bottom, see forests and gardens of marine plants, and flowers pink-petalled or tender

green, gently waving to and fro in the current; see the transparent medusæ disporting their rainbow beauties, and see the thousand and one strange-looking tropical fishes, of colours so bright and shapes so grotesque, that they seemed the fishes of our dreams, or caricatures of animal life.

Fast and sure on that reef we lay for upwards of forty-eight hours, and it was only by lightening the ship of coals, and buoying her with empty rum casks that we got safely afloat at last. The men were in good spirits all the time, because forsooth, the cat, was "*singing like all possessed.*"

Nothing to Eat.

It was the last voyage of the cruise. We were steering from Zanzibar to the Cape, under orders home. We had on board with us no less a personage than the bishop of C—— A—— and his learned curate, Dr. Blank. Now we had not been to sea over three days when, lo and behold! one-half, at least, of the casks of beef and provisions, supposed to be full, were found to be mere dummies. It was

nobody's fault—it always is nobody's fault in a case of that sort—but the upshot of it was, that all hands were put upon short allowance; and as our mess—having got into debt—was just then living on ship's provisions, we officers had to suffer the same privations as the men. Besides, we had neither beer, wine, nor spirits on board, very little water, and no coals to spare to distil more.

This was a very pretty look out for a three weeks' voyage, to the Cape, in mid-winter. And poor Tom came in for more cursing now than ever. Everybody cursed him everywhere; they cursed him below and cursed him aloft; cursed him on the quarter-deck, and cursed him in the cook's galley. But Tom only sung the louder.

"It was all along of that blessed cat," the sailors said; and they added, "that it was a good thing we had my lord bishop on board, to counteract the evil effects of the skipper's imp." The poor bishop suffered too, but mostly from sea-sickness. He kept his bed all the voyage. He was a stout man at Zanzibar, but he got con-

siderably thinner, before we reached the Cape. But his curate was more to be pitied, he was a thin man, didn't get sick, and had a stomach like a brewer's horse; and the more sorrow for that same, there being so little to put into it. Our biscuit must, I think, have been baked before the flood, each morsel, while black with cockroaches' filth outside, entertaining a whole colony of weevils inside; we ate the weevils, however, merely tapping each morsel on the table to get rid of the superabundant dust, before conveying it to our mouths. We had neither potatoes nor butter. We had white beans though, and black rice and fried sardines, to which latter we used to add a little turmeric and cayenne by way of flavouring. We actually got mean in our hunger, and used to say little snappish things to each other, about our share of the victuals; things which we would have been ashamed to say under any other circumstances. No one, I can assure you, was above helping himself, to the last spoonful of rice or beans, out of a delicate feeling of consideration for his neighbour.

In good sooth, sometimes three or four spoons, would meet at the dish at once in most undignified haste.

"Gentlemen, gentlemen," our little good-natured assistant paymaster would say; "better is a dinner of rice and fried sardines, where love is, than a stallëd ox and hatred therewith."

We should just have liked to have seen the stallëd ox, that's all. But this assistant paymaster was a stout bulky little chap, and didn't suffer half what we did. I'm certain he lived on his own fat all the way to the Cape, just as the sheep in the Highlands do, when they have the misfortune to be buried in the snow for a week or two. Our conversation all the dinner hour—when we weren't quarrelling—used to be about this glorious feed, and the next glorious feed, which we once had; and it would certainly have been amusing for an outsider—who wasn't hungry himself mind you—to have heard us, enlarging on all the dainties that had been set before us in happier times.

Our conversation would have been somewhat after the following fashion:—

S. "But, by George, when I was in the P. & O. Co.'s Service—ay, old fellows, that was the place to live—there is where we used to get *the* spreads."

All. "Yes, yes; tell us, there's a dear boy. What had you for dinner?"

S. "Well, you know, the bill of fare used to be two yards long, and a yard and a quarter wide. We had two soups, and then——"

All. "No, no; tell us first what the soups were?"

S. "Well, say vermicelli and macaro—Oh! hang it all, Moreton, that's the third time to my certain knowledge, that you've helped yourself to rice."

Moreton. "To-morrow's pea-soup day, never mind."

S. "But I do mind."

All. "Go on with your yarn."

S. "Well, vermicelli and macaroni, and then a bit of delicious white turbot, with oyster sauce and——"

All. "Yes, yes; go on."

S. "All very well to say go on; but I *shall* have those three beans, you greedy beggars. Well, then, after the fish came—" etc., etc., etc.

When S. had finished, R. would begin.

"That just reminds me of an hotel I was at in France," etc., and so each one told his experiences, to the infinite delectation of his neighbours, and having locust-like devoured everything we came across, we used to get up hungry and haggard, and run on deck to smoke away the tail end of our appetite.

In those days, our grace before and after meat was rather a peculiar one. The president said the first; it was, "Curse the cat." Then just before we rose from table, "Mr. Vice, will you kindly return thanks."

"*Confound* the cat."

The Last of the Skipper's Imp.

No one ever saw the last of him, however; although a seaman, called Davis, swore point black, that he had seen the cat fly overboard in a sheet of blue flame; but then Davis was

the biggest lubber and the greatest liar in the ship. The only thing known for certain is this: we were about three days' sail from Symon's Town, Cape of Good Hope. The night was dark and the weather squally, and poor Tom was last seen sitting, very quiet and pensive-like, on the hammock nettings aft. He was seen there, I say, in the middle watch; and he was never seen again alive or dead. The men swore roundly that he was a devil nothing more nor less, and that, being a devil, he couldn't stomach my lord bishop on board, and consequently took French leave and went home. The truth, I suppose is, that the ship gave a nasty lee lurch, and Tom, half asleep, missed his footing, and tumbled overboard. I know the skipper was sorry.

We kept a good look out for the *Flying Dutchman* after Tom's demise; but very much to my disappointment, we did not fall in with that ghostly ship. If I were merely writing a sailor's yarn, I should certainly say we had seen her, and give a most photographic-like description of her; but such

stories I leave landsmen to tell, for I think if a man has been for ten or a dozen years at sea, and kept his weather eye lifting all the time, it will take him the remainder of his life to tell the whole *truth alone*.

When we came down to the Cape, which we managed to do without any further adventures, there lay the new admiral's ship, all spick and span from England's shores, so all our fellows were turned over to, and went home in the old Admiral's ship, all except our engineer and my unhappy self. We, much to our disgust, were re-appointed to the saucy *Tickler*, which was to remain out for another commission, as tender to the new flagship. Now, however, we had a new captain, the jolliest little man alive; new officers, and a new crew, and we were all as jolly as sandboys. The new officers thought themselves tremendously clever chaps, and every night they used all to pull off their slippers and go pell mell at the unfortunate cockroaches; but the engineer and I sat like stoics, and let them crawl over us in scores, and if too many

TORTOISESHELL.

First Prize—Owned by Mr. L. Smith.

SILVER, or BLUE TABBY.

First Prize—Owned by Mr. Reynolds.

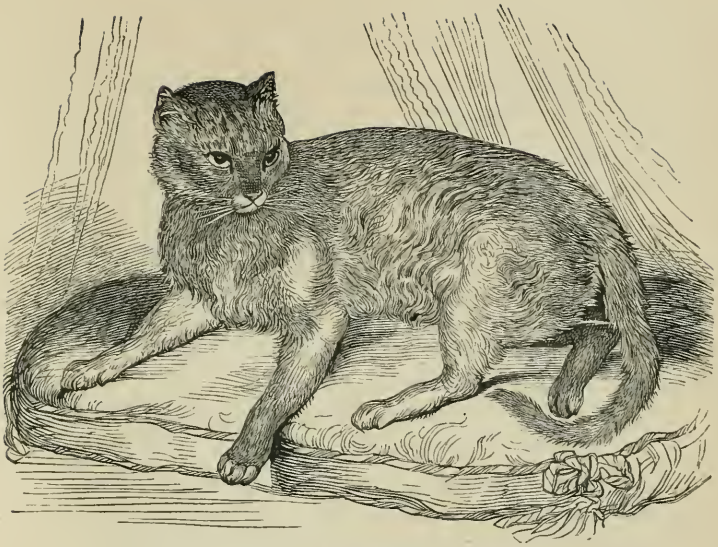
at one time came on the book we might be reading, we gently removed them. But before a month was over, our messmates found out the futility, of trying to diminish the number of cockroaches, and these interesting creatures had *carte blanche* all over the ship.

We sailed for Bombay.

But though black Tom was no more, ill-luck seemed still to hover in the wake of that little vessel.

I would willingly narrate our further adventures in detail, but somehow I have no heart, now that the cat has left the story. But, how we were caught in a gale off the Cape and the ship *taken aback* (that, reader, is much more dreadful than it appears on paper), how we sprang a leak a week after—glass falling and weather stormy, on a rock bound coast—and, just as the ship was beginning to stagger like a drunk man, and the boats were got ready for lowering, the engineer—brave little man—dived below water in the engine-room, and found it was no leak at all, but the great sea-cock left

open by a drunken stoker; how we ran on shore on that wild reef outside Johanna, and lay there for a whole week with our keel floating in splinters around us; how, finally we got off, and steamed to Bombay almost a wreck; the pumps going continually, and barely keeping her afloat; how we arrived safely through it all; how a liberal goverment paid rather more for repairing her, than would have bought a new one, and how she was sold three years after for an old song,—is it not all written in the log of Her Majesty's saucy gunboat, *Tickler*.



"Zula," the property of Mrs. Captain Barrett-Lennard. This cat was brought from Abyssinia at the conclusion of the war, fed on the way home on raw beef, and was long very wild. She is now very fond of her mistress, but has a great many eccentricities which other cats have not, and is altogether a wonderful specimen of cat-kind.

ADDENDA.

I DEEM it fair both to myself and to the reader, to supplement my own evidence on the "Curiosities of Cat Life," by giving the names and addresses of my authorities for those of my anecdotes, which may seem to run contrary to the generally received opinions, concerning cats; at the same time thanking those ladies and gentlemen, who have taken so much interest in the progress of this work, and expressed themselves willing to vouch for the truth

of the incidents herein related by me. I have tried to make the anecdotes as readable as possible, and as humorous, as I know many people think "cats" a dry subject; *but in no single instance have the interests of truth been disregarded.* My anecdotes are what might be called sample anecdotes, as I have many hundreds more of the same sort, my object being to describe *pussy as she really is,* and thus to gain favour for an animal hitherto understood only by the few, and abused by the many. And, nothing would give me greater pain, than the reader to have an idea, that my cats are exceptional cats; for, I distinctly aver, that *no cat mentioned in this book, has either done or suffered anything, which any other cat in the kingdom cannot do or suffer.*

INDEX OF NAMES AND ADDRESSES.

Anderson, Alex., Mr., New Fowlis, Crieff, N.B.
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Whyte, J., Mr., Dallfied Terrace, Dundee.
Wilson, G., Mrs., Cults, near Aberdeen.

Note A.—I have to acknowledge with thanks, the kind letter on the points and classification of cats, sent me by J. Jenner Weir, F.L.S.

Note B.—Fishermen, returning in their boats on clear summer nights, often see a bright light on this mountain's side. I should think the phenomenon due to the reflection of star-rays, from a piece of rock crystal; but the superstitious Skye men have a different opinion, and aver that this light marks the entrance to the cave of the buried treasure. I hope they may find it. I strongly suspect, however, that the malignant fairy is nothing more nor less than a wild cat.

Note C.—Anecdote of the wild cat. Mr. Sibbald.

Note D.—Anecdote related by Mrs. McDonald.

Note E.—Anecdote of "Tucker." Mr. Swanson.

Note F.—Anecdote of cat hunting on three legs. Mr. John McLean.

Note G.—Anecdote by Miss Oliver.

Note H.—Related by Mrs. Church.

Note I.—Related by Mrs. McDonald.

Note K.—The cat belonging to Lieutenant Hawthorne. This cat was first prize for weight at the Crystal Palace.

Note L.—Anecdote related by Mrs. D. H. Gordon.

Note M.—Anecdote by Miss Oliver.

Note N. — For private reasons the address of voucher for the truth of this anecdote cannot be published, but can be sent privately, if wished.

Note O.—Related by Mr. Murray, Stretford Road, Hulme, Manchester.

Note P. — This sport (?) is also common in the Highlands of Scotland.

Note Q.—This happened at the mill of Maidencraig, near Aberdeen. Mr. W. Young, was then miller.

Note R.—Related by Mrs. G. Wilson.

Note S.—This queer little doggie may be seen any evening at the Crown Hotel, Gosport. A small white bull-terrier.

Note T.—Related by Mr. Rebecca.

Note U.—Anecdote by Mr. Millar.

Note V.—Anecdote by Mrs. Church.

Note W.—Related by Miss Oliver.

Note X.—Related by Mr. Swanson.

THE END.

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